

Tensions divide Labour leadership

Jill Sherman and Philip Webster on sniping between rival camps in the Government

THERE was growing alarm last night in the Government over attempts by allies of both men to drive a wedge between Tony Blair and Gordon Brown. Donald Dewar, the Scottish Secretary, said that the relationship between the Prime Minister and the Chancellor was "the rock on which this Government stands", suggesting that any attempt to undermine it could prove highly damaging.

Mr Dewar strongly disputed allegations that Mr Blair indirectly rebuked Brown during last Thursday's Cabinet meeting and said there was no split between the two men. But Labour insiders were still saying yesterday that the Prime Minister believed that the Chancellor had been ill-advised to cooperate with the biography of him by Paul Routledge and that he had been damaged by it.

One source claimed Mr Brown had "psychological flaws" while others said it was time for the Chancellor to stop "kidding himself" about the leadership election more than three years ago. A Blair ally suggested that Mr Brown's advisers had "allowed their egos to run away with them". They also argued that Mr Brown's decision to allow Nick Brown, the Chief Whip, to give two interviews to Mr Routledge since the general election was a misjudgement.

They believe that the publication of the book, which claims that Mr Blair broke a pact not to stand against Mr Brown in the Labour leadership contest in 1994, has allowed the Chancellor's enemies to attack him over other issues, such as single-parent benefits and welfare reform.

It was clear yesterday that relations between Mr Blair and Gordon Brown have become increasingly strained by the attacks. William Hague, the Tory leader, seized on the tensions to suggest that Mr Blair was "at war" with the Chancellor. Mr Blair's official spokesman insisted that the Prime Minister still had the highest regard for Mr Brown and that his role in Government was very important. "People will try to drive a wedge between Tony Blair and Gordon Brown but they will fail," he said.

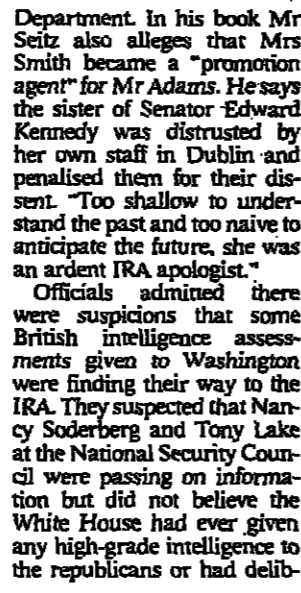
But confidants of Mr Blair said that it was time for Mr Brown to "grow up" and concentrate on his role. They say that he has been damaged by the episode and they have accused him of relying too much on personal advisers who spend too much time promoting him as a political personality. One senior supporter of Mr Blair said that Charlie Whelan, Mr Brown's press secretary, and Ed Balls, his economic adviser, had allowed "their egos to run away with them".

Thatcher row halts a degree for Blair

TONY BLAIR was denied one of this year's honorary degrees at Oxford University because of an agreement more than a decade ago not to make awards to serving politicians. Oxford's tradition of honouring graduates who became Prime Minister was suspended after controversy over a proposal to give Margaret Thatcher a degree in 1985. Dons voted against, in protest at higher-education cuts. Although not binding on future selections, guidelines adopted after the row suggested that the only way to spare the university further embarrassment was to rule out high-profile politicians. Since then, only foreign politicians have received honorary degrees. The proposal to honour Mr Blair came as the Government began to consider whether to continue paying tuition fees to Oxbridge colleges. Even some of his supporters were concerned that the offer of an award might have been interpreted as an attempt to influence the decision.

Major's ministers shared envoy's fear of leaks to IRA

MINISTERS in John Major's Government shared the worries of the former US ambassador to London that secrets sent to the White House were leaked to the IRA, senior British and American sources said yesterday. But they claimed that nothing threatening national security had been compromised. Government officials yesterday played down the allegations, made in a book to be published by Raymond Seitz, the former ambassador, that the White House leaked British secrets to Gerry Adams and Sinn Fein. But one former minister said that the Major Government made sure that nothing other than general information could have been handed on. "We were on our guard the moment Jean Kennedy Smith was appointed ambassador to Dublin."



Seitz: first career diplomat in 200 years to be appointed Ambassador to London

A White House spokeswoman said yesterday: "We don't comment on intelligence matters but the President has full faith and confidence in Ambassador Jean Kennedy Smith." Mr Seitz, a popular ambassador who was replaced in 1994, was caught in the middle of a furious row between Washington and London when President Clinton unexpectedly granted Mr Adams a visa to the United States in 1994, overruling objections from Mr Seitz and the State



Soderberg: suspected of passing on secrets

Department. In his book Mr Seitz also alleges that Mrs Smith became a "promotion agent" for Mr Adams. He says the sister of Senator Edward Kennedy was distressed by her own staff in Dublin and penalised them for their dissent. "Too shallow to understand the past and too naive to anticipate the future, she was an ardent IRA apologist." Officials admitted there were suspicions that some British intelligence assessments given to Washington were finding their way to the IRA. They suspected that Nancy Soderberg and Tony Lake at the National Security Council were passing on information but did not believe the White House had ever given any high-grade intelligence to the republicans or had deliberately passed on sensitive information to assist their cause. "There may have been times when they used information to put pressure on Sinn Fein to stop them from lying or doing the wrong thing," said one well-placed British source. "That doesn't mean to say stuff being handed over went into the pocket of the IRA." Information appeared to come out informally in telephone conversations and gossip. One American official said there could have been some loose talk by ill-informed junior White House employees, or by US diplomats in Dublin who received copies of cables sent to Washington by the London embassy. Mr Seitz, who was highly respected by Whitehall and by Britain's intelligence services, would have been fully aware that indiscreet passing of classified information to Sinn Fein could have exposed the sourcing of the intelligence. Although the Americans have tried to separate Sinn Fein from the IRA, government ministers and the security services MI5 and MI6 have always maintained that Sinn Fein and the IRA are inextricably linked. If the intelligence services suspected a leak to Mr Adams, they would undoubtedly have recommended careful fileting of intelligence about the IRA.



Man who raised hackles

RAYMOND SEITZ was so popular in Britain, where he served as American ambassador, that John Major took the unusual step of urging President Clinton to keep him on when he came to office. But within the Clinton Administration Mr Seitz was deeply unpopular. And few American ambassadors have left office with such contempt for the administration they represented as Mr Seitz did over the sensitive question of Ireland. Mr Seitz was the first career diplomat in 200 years to be appointed Ambassador to London, normally a post reserved for friends of the President or generous contributors to his election campaign. He had served in Britain and was known for his charm, social sophistication and knowledge of British politics. The change of Administration was a problem for both London and Washington. Mr Seitz did his best to smooth the diplomatic ripples caused by the Clinton Administration's suspicions that the Conservatives had helped the Bush campaign. Mr Clinton clearly wanted his own man in London: this led diplomats to drop heavy hints in Washington that Anglo-American relations would be strengthened by retaining Mr Seitz. Mr Clinton did so, but relations with his embassy became strained.

He provoked rare controversy in Britain with his leaving address, in which he suggested that Britain was more valuable to America as an ally at the heart of the European Union than as a country standing detached from it. After leaving the Foreign Service, he stayed on in London: the ostensible "diplomatic" reason being the difficulty of arranging the return to America of his dogs. In fact he was determined to make the most of his wide circle of friends he had entertained so elegantly at Winfield House, the official ambassador's residence in Regent's Park. He has since settled in London and sits on the boards of several businesses.

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Voting

Continued from page 1 importance of voting and is to look for new ways to revamp citizenship lessons in schools to make politics and voting relevant to teenage voters. But his aim is to make voting easier for everyone and he would like to change the present system of compiling electoral registers. At present councils canvas households once a year and they must register voters by a certain date. Mr Howarth wants to study the feasibility of a "rolling register" so that people could add their names to the list at any time in the year. He also wants to make it easier for people away on holiday, on business, and the sick and infirm to have a vote. He believes the deadlines for registering for a postal or proxy vote are too rigid and that instead of having to register every autumn for a postal vote people should be able to make up their minds nearer the date of the election. He is also particularly anxious to help the homeless - without a fixed address they are frequently unable to vote. One idea might be to allow the homeless to register in a particular constituency without supplying an address. There are also serious problems facing many disabled people - even if there are mobile polling stations, usually in schools, few have facilities for wheelchair access. Mr Howarth hopes to test the ideas for reform in a series of focus groups. He is to report to Mr Straw within a year. The groups are to debate the pros and cons of moving from a "first-past-the-post" system. Ministers are not going to examine the question of election expenses or limits for candidates until they have received the report from Lord Neill, QC, the public standards watchdog, on the future of party political funding.

IN BRIEF

Rowntree gives cash to Tory left wing

A political foundation that gave millions to Labour is to donate £200,000 to the Conservative Mainstream group set up by Kenneth Clarke and Michael Heseltine to combat Tory Euroscepticism. The Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust said it feared that Labour's landslide victory was unhealthy for democracy and it wanted to help the Tories to become a more effective Opposition. Tony Flower, for the trust, said: "It is purely to support a pluralistic democratic process." The money will be paid in instalments over four years.

Selling Labour

Tony Blair is considering appointing a Labour Party chairman to spearhead political campaigning in the run-up to the next election. Whoever is appointed will take charge of party recruitment as well as "selling" government policy to the media.

Jail for bribes

MPs caught taking bribes will face up to seven years in prison under proposals to be confirmed this week by Jack Straw, the Home Secretary. The new system of penalties for corruption would also extend to those who offer MPs cash for political favours.

Pollution rises

Air quality has deteriorated at many monitoring sites around the country, despite improvements in anti-pollution technologies. Levels of soot particulates, mainly from diesel engines, rose at 15 sites last year, according to Friends of the Earth.

Inquiry clash

French crash investigators dismissed criticisms from the former Deputy Chief Constable of Greater Manchester of the inquiry into the death of Diana, Princess of Wales. John Stalker said the investigation was a secretive "botch-up" mired in bureaucracy.

Taking charge

A British detective is being sent to St Helena to run the island's police force after complaints about poor standards and the jailing of a senior policeman for burglary. Inspector Alastair Cumming, 35, is a senior investigator with British Transport Police.

Advertisement for Harrods 'The Sale' featuring 'The Further Reductions' and 'The Finest Merchandise in the World'.

Dieters may do better by praying than weighing

BY RUTH GLEDHILL, RELIGION CORRESPONDENT

DIETING may be a sin, says a theological study. It suggests that people could find more happiness if they focused on spirituality rather than calorie-counting, and might still lose weight as well.

The study of the "theology of dieting", by a former weight-loss consultant who is now training for the Anglican priesthood, says that women have been forced to focus on food as part of their self-image. Lisa Batye, married with four children, said that, even within the history of the Church, young women who died needlessly by fasting had been regarded as saints.

She had the idea for her MA thesis in social and pastoral theology at Manchester University after working with groups of women trying to lose weight. The breakthrough came when a star pupil, who lost 2½ stone, thanked her at the end of a course, and returned all the low-calorie products she had bought. The woman had achieved weight loss not with the products, but through the group's support. "I began to be aware of how

women were using food to meet other needs," she said. "Their body image was determining the way they valued themselves. I realised there was a huge industry based on encouraging women to work on themselves and change their bodies, rather than encouraging them to change the world around them."

"There is a very strong sense among evangelical Christians that it is wrong, evil, to be fat; that fat people must be very weak-willed; that they are sinful. I asked the question of

whether we were created by God to be an average size, to be the ideal weight put out by Weight Watchers. If we were created in God's image, and God is as multi-faceted as I believe, then we should expect there to be lots of different shapes and sizes of people. And if God created each of us to be a given size, it is conceivably possible that to diet could be against God's will, and could be sinful."

Her study suggests that dieting is a "social disease" and the only effective cure is to

address the issue theologically. "I would like to see more women realising some of the things I have found out, because it has liberated me from my concerns about being overweight." She was not the so-called ideal weight, "but I became happy somehow as soon as I understood it through Christian eyes."

She would like to see all men and women who believe themselves to be overweight get in touch with their spiritual sides and identify this with their physical bodies. "It would not necessarily make them thin, but their dieting problems would be over."

She cites the mystic St Catherine of Siena as an anorexic: "It earned her tremendous regard for holiness. That persists now. We see how well people are regarded when they lose a lot of weight."

The study is one of 4,000 highlighted in a new database of contemporary theological research, to allow people in the pews to be in touch with developments in academia that might help them to develop their spirituality.



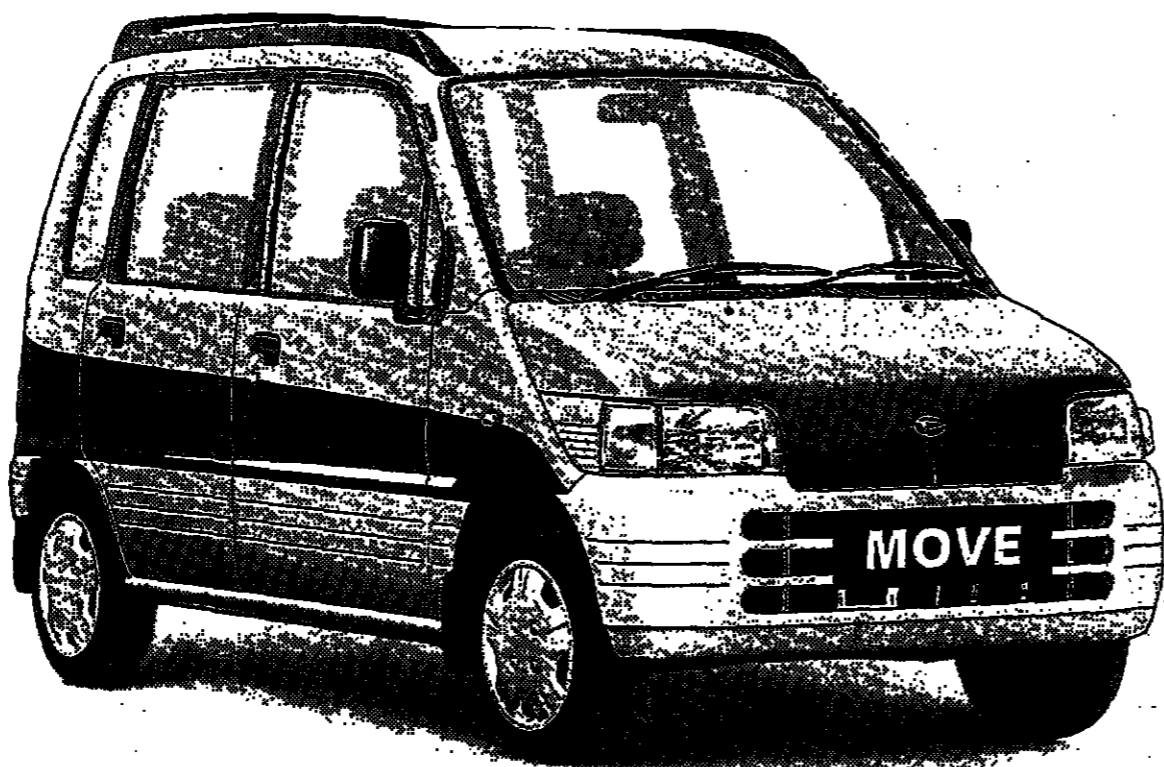
Peter Hodgkinson, a sculptor, examines the boot on a life-size model of his statue of footballing hero Sir Tom Finney, which he hopes will stand at the entrance to the new national soccer museum in Preston, Lancashire

SLIMMING FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Many slimming meals contravene EU laws soon to be implemented in Britain (Nick Nuttall writes). A Food Commission survey of seven diet products found:

- Crunch and Slim bars provide 44 per cent of their calories from fat. Only 30 per cent will be permitted.
- Both NutsaSlim and Thigh and Hip Slim have fewer than the 200 kcal per serving the law will require.
- Crunch and Slim, Slim-Fast ready-to-drink and Complan all contain too little protein.
- Three of the seven products failed to provide adequate levels of vitamins and minerals.
- Six of the products make claims about speed of or amount of weight loss, which will be forbidden.

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New laws to silence the road rowdies

By KEVIN EASON

DRIVERS of cars equipped with high-powered sound equipment that thumps out music at deafening levels could face spot fines of up to £100 under an extension of noise pollution laws.

The "boom boxes", favoured mainly by young drivers, cost as little as £100 but generate between 120 and 160 decibels - 20 decibels more than the noisiest nightclub or a jet aircraft on take-off.

Offenders have so far managed to slip through a loophole in the law. Environmental health officers are unable to prevent the noise because they cannot stop cars on the move, while police say there is no offence that allows them to force drivers to turn the music down or switch it off.

Under new proposals to be disclosed by ministers in the spring, police will be empowered to pull over the worst offenders and issue a fixed penalty notice, with an automatic fine of between £60 and £100. But they are unlikely to go as far as France, where car stereos are limited to a maximum 100 decibels, or Germany, which is considering imposing a limit of 90 decibels.

Call to curb fees paid to televise big matches

By CAROL MIDGLEY

THE Government is being urged to appoint a sports broadcasting regulator to cap the amount of money paid to televise Premier League football matches and other key sporting events.

In a report published today, Demos, the independent think-tank, says the move would limit the "exorbitant" wages paid to sportsmen such as the footballer Alan Shearer - who earns £30,000 a week - and "give sport back to the fans".

Professor Julian Le Grand, from the London School of Economics, and Bill New, a researcher, said the sporting bodies had a monopoly that had been used to maximise profits to the detriment of fans. The advent of satellite sports channels, mainly Sky Sport, had put huge amounts of funding into sports such as football, cricket and rugby but had decreased the accessibility of viewing to some fans.

Professor Le Grand said the growing power of BSkyB, of which News International, the subsidiary of the News Corporation that owns The Times, owns 40 per cent, had massively increased the amounts charged by the sporting providers.

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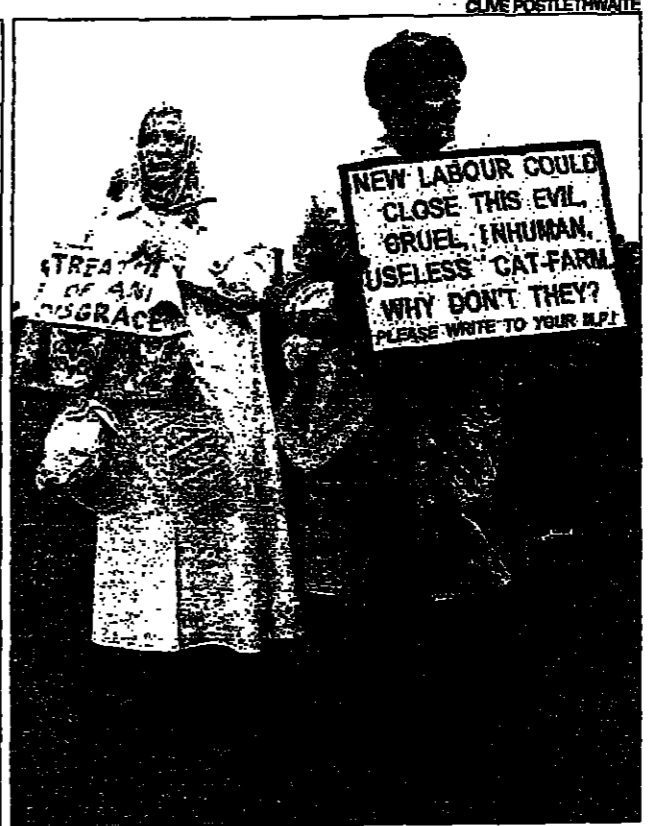
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Police turned out in force yesterday at a demonstration against a farm in Witney, Oxfordshire, that breeds cats for vivisection. More than 350 activists turned up after the protest was advertised on the Internet

Critics unite to praise Hughes masterpiece

By MARK HENDERSON

THE new collection of poems by Ted Hughes, dealing with his troubled relationship with Sylvia Plath, has confirmed the Poet Laureate's place as one of the great figures in English literature, leading British and Irish poets said yesterday.

The critics, who first saw the new poems when *The Times* began serialising the work on Saturday, said that Hughes would be remembered as a poet in the class of Blake, Keats, Hardy and Auden. The new collection, *Birthday Letters*, ought also to rehabilitate his reputation among those who blamed him for Plath's suicide in 1963, they said.

The Irish poet Tom Paulin said the collection was one of the finest of the 20th century and an eloquent answer to his critics. "It will bolster his reputation as one of our most important poets," he said yesterday. "Along with *Moor-town Elegies*, I think it will be regarded as his most important work."

"Hughes's admirers will

feel that here is someone emerging from a tragic silence. It is definitive, and I very much hope it will silence all his detractors. It's a knock-out volume, absolutely staggering."

Christopher Reid, a poet and Hughes's editor at Faber and Faber, said the Poet Laureate had produced "one of the great works. He is the greatest English poet of this part of the century," he said.



Fenton: praised quality of Hughes's writing

"Auden holds that position in the first half of the century, and in the second half Ted then takes over the role."

James Fenton, Professor of Poetry at Oxford University, said: "If you look at what he has done recently, there is the well-received translation of Ovid, as well as his very interesting anthology of poems to learn by heart. He is working away at a tremendous rate and producing work of the highest quality, and this collection must add to his already high status. For most poets the feeling is, 'Good on him.'"

The collection would shed valuable light on Hughes's relationship with Plath, Fenton said. "There is great excitement about this work, which has been kept so carefully secret. The content is obviously very interesting."

"One or two poets have had the ambition for a long time to write a poem a part of the interest of which would be content. People would read that poem to find out what the

information in it was. Hughes has succeeded in doing this."

"Everybody is fascinated to see what he felt. Content in itself doesn't guarantee the success of the poem, but content like this doesn't do much harm. What is striking is the intensity with which he still comes to the subject."

Paulin added that he had been struck by the honesty and danger of the poems. "It's got that tragic kind of feeling, like you're walking a tightrope as you're reading all the poems. It is incredibly intense, there is a tremendous sense of risk and danger and impending disaster."

"The poems also have a visionary quality that remind me of Stanley Spencer. There is a mystical humanism about them."

"There is a medieval quality, a claustrophobia of fate and destiny and being trapped, of chances having been missed. It has great authenticity."

Today's extracts, page 15

Charges for pilot over getaway by Asil Nadir

By STEWART TENDLER
CRIME CORRESPONDENT

A PILOT was charged yesterday with helping Asil Nadir, former head of the Polly Peck empire, to jump bail and flee from £30 million fraud charges five years ago.

Peter Dimond, 56, a self-employed businessman, is due to appear at Bow Street magistrates' court today. He is accused of perverting the course of justice "in relation to the removal of Asil Nadir from this country".

Mr Dimond, a former car dealer, who was formerly from Petersfield, Hampshire, but has been living in Northern Cyprus, faces up to five years in jail if he is charged and convicted.

Mr Nadir built up Polly Peck International from a small fruit trading business. It was one of Europe's biggest conglomerates until its collapse in 1990 with debts of £1.3 billion. Mr Nadir was on £3.5 million bail and awaiting trial on theft and false accounting charges when he fled Britain on May 4, 1993.

Bill 'will let privacy cases go to court'

Frances Gibb reports on concerns about the impact of human rights legislation

CONCERNS in the media about the creation of a privacy law were fuelled this weekend when a leading constitutional lawyer gave warning that people would use the courts rather than the Press Complaints Commission to pursue grievances on the subject. The concerns arise from the Human Rights Bill whereby the European Convention on Human Rights is to be incorporated into domestic law.

Sir William Wade took issue with the Lord Chancellor's view that the courts would act as the main authority for dealing with privacy disputes. His comments, made to a conference of judges and lawyers held by Cambridge University's Centre for Public Law, will further media fears that the Bill will lead to a privacy right being developed by the courts.

Lord Irvine of Lairg, the Lord Chancellor, has said that the courts would "have only to intervene if self-regulation did not adequately secure compliance with the convention". But Sir William said: "It is easy to see that the 'little man' may prefer to complain to the PCC and so save the expense of going to law. But what of the bigger man, perhaps with the

bigger reputation, who may wish to go to the court for the same of its more powerful remedies?"

Others, such as David Pannick QC, a leading administrative law silk, had suggested that the courts would recognise that in all but the most extreme circumstances it was consistent to leave privacy questions to the relevant specialist body. But Sir William said: "The PCC can neither issue injunctions nor award compensation. Nor can a number of other bodies to which similar arguments apply, such as the Broadcasting Standards Commission and the Advertising Standards Authority."

Sir William's paper questioned whether - if a news-

paper committed "an outrageous invasion of privacy" - the European Court of Human Rights would accept a complaint to the PCC as the "effective remedy before a national authority" as required under the convention.

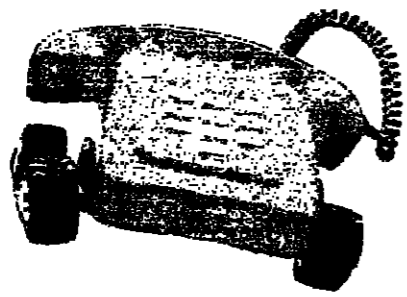
"If the victim went to the court in England and asserted his Article Eight right to respect for privacy he could be awarded damages for the outrage and perhaps an injunction to prohibit its repetition," he said.

"The court's armament is so manifestly superior to the PCC's that the victim may naturally prefer to the court for legal remedies."

"Only if the PCC can itself offer equally effective remedies by bringing pressure to bear on the offending newspaper is it likely to satisfy the European Court." This seemed far from being the case at present, Sir William said.

Sir William also said there needed to be clarification over the scope of the Bill. The Government had indicated that it could cover only public authorities or the public acts of bodies which have public and private sector functions. But Sir William says this will lead to illogicalities.

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Poachers could make forests unsafe for public

By MICHAEL HORSWELL

POLICE have expressed concern over the ruthless activities of deer-poachers after a gamekeeper narrowly escaped being shot dead when his truck came under fire. Landowners and Forestry Commission workers have warned that the public may be at risk in the prime poaching forests of East Anglia.

The taking of wild deer in East Anglia by groups in four-wheel-drive vehicles — some with refrigeration units in back-up vans — is big business. Up to 5,000 deer may be poached each year in the region, particularly in the Thetford and Swaffham conifer forests, owned by the Forestry Commission, and adjoining farmland, according to Farm Watch, which attempts to combat rural crime.

By the time a deer has been haunched, often at the roadside, it is a lucrative catch. A red deer is worth up to £250 on the black market and a roe up to £80. With persisting doubts about the safety of beef, venison is providing a saleable alternative.

In the incident that occurred

shortly before Christmas, a bullet passed through the gamekeeper's windscreen and rear window at head height as he checked for poachers on an estate at Little Plumstead, Norfolk, at night, and spotted two men who opened fire from 30 yards. Police have urged the public to be on the lookout.

Trevor Banham, who works for the Forestry Commission at Thetford Forest, said: "The forest is an open place and, bluntly, someone is going to get shot when they

are out jogging or walking the dog. The irresponsible use of firearms. The poachers use a high-powered pump to pick up the eyes of a deer and they can shoot from up to 250 yards."

Signs of poachers include the headlights of an off-road vehicle swerving across the fields, the barking of hunchers and the firing of a rifle. Usually the alarm is raised too late by the landowner or forester, who calls the police to catch the poachers. By the time they reach the scene, the trail of fur through the undergrowth, where the animal has been dragged, leads to a severed head and discarded entrails where it has been bled by having its throat cut and butchered. By first light the damage to crops from the vehicle bears testimony to the determination of the pursuit.

PC Danny Cracknell, wildlife liaison officer with Norfolk police, said: "The cruelty of what the poachers do is horrific. They get in on a herd and follow a deer until they can shoot it or the dogs pull it down. An organised gang will take up to 12 deer."

"We have been trying to catch them for the best part of two years. They will shoot the animal and, within a few minutes, are miles away." Only one conviction under the 1991 Deer Act was secured last year.

Tony Bone, who runs Farm Watch in Norfolk, said that deer were often maimed, rather than killed outright, by the shotguns, crossbows and small-calibre rifles used. "Gangs don't care what they have to do. They will break through gates and we have reason to believe they have set fire to haystacks as a diversion," he said.

Pat Childerhouse, who farms at Weeting, has endured severe damage to fields of sugarbeet, wheat and barley on six occasions. He said: "Poaching has always gone on, but is big business now. I have blocked roadways but they get in through the forestry land. They bolt-crop padlocks."



Thousands of deer are poached in East Anglia

Helicopters help in high-speed stalking

By GILLIAN HARRIS SCOTLAND CORRESPONDENT

DEER stalkers could soon be locating herds from helicopters as well as using traditional tracking skills on foot.

The Red Deer Commission began trials on the use of helicopters to help in deer culls this month, to help to pinpoint the exact position of the deer, allowing the stalkers to maximise the kill over a short time. In a report due next month, the commission is expected to say that the experiment has proved successful.

Dick Youngson, its technical director, said: "The helicopters have been very valuable in remote areas, particularly in the West Highlands where there are sea lochs and steep ground. They have allowed us to move teams of stalkers around very quickly."

The stalkers had mixed feelings at the onset of the trials. "We've done our job the way we do it for hundreds of years," said one. "It's our way of life. I couldn't see how helicopters could help."

Jan Hope, who ran the trials, said the stalkers had been reassured that their talents would always be in demand. "Their experience and knowledge remain absolutely crucial. Helicopters can only help us locate the herds. They do not affect the way we approach the deer on the ground."

Pat Childerhouse, who farms at Weeting, has endured severe damage to fields of sugarbeet, wheat and barley on six occasions. He said: "Poaching has always gone on, but is big business now. I have blocked roadways but they get in through the forestry land. They bolt-crop padlocks."



Proud father Jim, the Tamarin Cotton Top, who met new mate Paula through a computer dating agency

Computer date brings twins for endangered Tamarin monkeys

JIM the Tamarin Cotton Top monkey and his mate Paula, who met through an electronic dating agency for endangered primates just over a year ago, have become the proud parents of twins.

Only 1,000 Cotton Tops remain in the wild, in the rain forests of Colombia.

Zoologists around the world are making a joint effort to return monkeys bred in captivity to their natural habitats. So when Jim's first mate, Rosie, died in October 1996 curator Valda Frillery began looking for a new partner.

She went to the Internet, tapping into EAZA, an online computer database run by the European Association of Zoos and Aquariums. With information on Cotton Tops in



Paula checks the coast is clear for her family

captivity around the globe at her fingertips, it took her only five days to decide that Paula would be the perfect match for Jim.

Ms Frillery, 43, who runs

the Palms Tropical Oasis at Stapeley Water Gardens in South Cheshire, said: "Rosie, Jim's first partner, was brought up by humans so she didn't get the opportunity to learn how to look after her young."

"She had many babies by Jim, including the first recorded Tamarin quads, but unfortunately they all died because she didn't know what to do when they were born."

"When we found Paula on the computer we were overjoyed because she seemed to be the ideal mate for Jim. And we didn't have to travel far to get her when we eventually found her — she was living in this country, in Drusilla's Zoo in East Sussex."

Paula and Jim have been together for more than a year — and six weeks ago the twins were born. Now the two tiny offspring will not be separated from 10-year-old Jim, who carries them on his back all day long.

"We don't know what sex they are yet because we can't disturb them until they get a little older," said Ms Frillery. "The adults are very protective of their young and if we tried to pick them up we could be in great danger."

"Although they look adorable, the Tamarins are very dangerous if they are disturbed."

Ms Frillery has high hopes that Paula will provide Jim with more offspring to help further the Tamarin monkey's worldwide captive breeding programme.

Delays on parole increase prison crowding

By RICHARD FORD HOME CORRESPONDENT

HUNDREDS of prisoners are being kept in jail longer than necessary, adding to overcrowding, because of bureaucratic delays in dealing with their applications for parole.

Sixty per cent of inmates seeking parole are not notified on time about the result of a review of their case, according to a Prison Service instruction sent to staff. The result is that offenders are kept in jail longer, while the jail population grows. Last week the number of people in the 135 prisons in England and Wales rose by 617 to 62,970.

In a memo seen by The Times, Tony Pearson, Deputy Director General of the Prison Service, told governors to ensure that complete parole files on offenders reach the Parole Board at least 18 weeks before prisoners are eligible for release. Mr Pearson wrote: "There are presently substantial delays in the parole system, which mean that only around 40 per cent of inmates applying for parole are notified of the result of their review on time."

"This in turn means that those receiving a positive decision are kept in custody for longer than necessary. This is unfair to prisoners and is unacceptable at time of ever-increasing pressure on prison places."

Last year the Parole Board considered 4,899 cases and gave parole to 1,761. It has complained about the delays in receiving files from prisons and last year claimed that dossiers arrived late in the majority of cases. Stephen Shaw, chairman of the Prison Reform Trust, said yesterday: "It is an absurd situation when the prison system is grossly overcrowded."

Every prisoner serving more than four years is eligible for parole at the halfway point of their sentence and can be released on parole at any time between then and the two-thirds point. The dossiers include reports by prison psychologists, prison officers and probation officers, and details of the inmates' criminal history.

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Schools reassure on charity tax break

ar discoveries on the blink

Negatives cast light on long-lost high life

A treasure trove of photographs shows portraits not seen for nearly a century, reports **Dalya Alberge**



Edward, Prince of Wales, by Lafayette, in 1897

HISTORIC photographic portraits of turn-of-the-century figures such as Lillie Langtry, the actress who became the King's mistress, and an eccentric "Dancing Marquess" who squandered his fortune on extravagant costumes for high society balls, are among thousands of glass negatives that have come to light.

All have been acquired by the National Portrait Gallery. Most of them, its curator of photographs believes, are unique. Original printing processes have been revived to reproduce the albumen, carbon and platinum prints.

The gallery's curator, Terence Pepper, said: "Some of the negatives are quite cracked and in bad condition. But it's so exciting printing something that hasn't been printed for 100 years."

Many of the newly acquired pictures were created in the three leading studios of the Edwardian era — Lafayette, H. Walter Barnett and Bassano. Mr Pepper, who has selected 110 images for an exhibition opening on January

30, said they gave a taste of "the sumptuous existence enjoyed by the members of *fin-de-siècle* high society".

Some are posed images against stylised backgrounds, often imaginary scenes painted on to the negatives, and others record stylish get-togethers and country house shooting parties.

Several of the pictures record the 1897 Devonshire House Ball, a fancy-dress celebration of Queen Victoria's diamond jubilee. Among the 700 guests were the Princess of Wales, the future Queen Alexandra, in the guise of Marguerite de Valois, wife of Henry IV of France. Mr Pepper described her as "the first glamorous photographic icon in the Royal Family". Others, in the most flamboyant costumes imaginable, included Daisy, Princess of Fies (1873-1943) — wife of one of the richest princes of Germany — as the Queen of Sheba; she was considered one of the greatest beauties of the day though, judging from her photograph, the camera did



The "Dancing Marquess" at a fancy-dress ball

not love her. The craze for motor cars, bicycles and ballooning is also reflected.

A picture of 15 members of the Gladstone family features each of them with their own bicycle and a portrait of Edward VII, published in 1902, shows him posing in his 24-horsepower Daimler.

Among hundreds of other sitters are Frances Evelyn (Daisy), Countess of Warwick, the society hostess and philanthropist; and Mrs Keppel, great-grandmother of Camilla Parker Bowles.

A portrait of Henry Cyril Paget, 5th Marquess of Anglesey, nicknamed the "Dancing Marquess", in costume for the Headgear fancy-dress ball, is a reminder of a man who squandered his fortune on jewellery and costumes for theatrical extravaganzas. At his death in 1905, at the age of 30, one contemporary report said: "His example will re-

main one of the strongest arguments against our hereditary system that the most ardent revolutionary would wish for."

Many of the negatives are the work of Alexander Bassano, one of numerous photographers who had the royal appointment. Bassano's company — originally based in Regent Street and Bond Street — is still trading. The National Portrait Gallery acquired the collection, dating from 1870 to 1920, from its archives; among the negatives are 140 images of Lord Kitchener, including the original portrait used for the First World War recruiting poster, "Your Country Needs You".

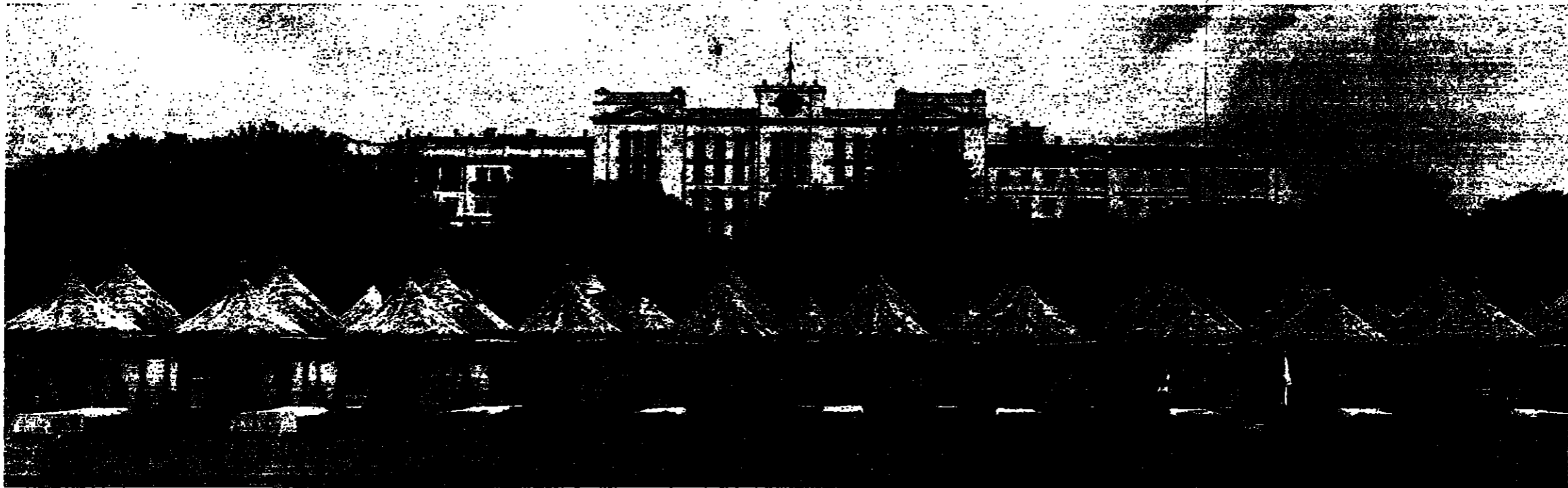
The gallery has also acquired more than 30 portraits Bassano took of Queen Victoria. An exhibition of these earlier images is planned.



Lillie Langtry, by Lafayette, in 1899: she said her purpose in life was "to look nice and make myself agreeable"

Arts page 18, 19

Photographed at Sheraton's Hotel Des Bains, Venice Lido, Italy



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Iraq envoy killed in Jordan

MYSERY last night surrounded the killing of six Iraqis, including a senior diplomat, his wife and two wealthy businessmen, who were stabbed at a house in Amman, the Jordanian capital.

Two Egyptians also died in what a Jordanian official described as an "Algerian-style" attack which bore the hallmarks of a professional hit. The likeliest motive was a feud over business contracts between powerful and greedy factions within Iraq's regime, Iraqi dissidents said.

Hikmet al-Hijou, Iraq's No 2 at its embassy in Amman, was killed when four or five men broke into the house of a millionaire Iraqi businessman who was hosting a Ramadan meal attended by other wealthy businessmen.

The only survivor was said to be a Greek woman, herself critically injured, who told police the attackers spoke with distinct Iraqi accents. Iraqi dissidents said she was the girlfriend of the host, Sami George Thomas, a member of Iraq's Assyrian Christian community.

Mr Thomas and another Iraqi businessman, Nemir Aouji, may have been the intended target rather than

Business feuding may lie behind the slaughter of eight in a millionaire's house, writes Michael Theodoulou

the diplomat, Jordanian security officials and Iraqi dissidents said.

Such carnage is extremely rare in Amman, the usually sedate Jordanian capital which is home to a large expatriate Iraqi community.

It took several hours for news of the killings to emerge and when it did it came in a terse statement from Baghdad, which announced the immediate dispatch to Jordan of Foreign Ministry and security officials to investigate. It called the killings a "treacherous" act.

From the tone of its statements, Baghdad was attempting to blame Iraqi dissidents

based in Jordan, a claim dismissed as "lies" by opposition figures, who in turn hinted that the killings resulted from a feud within the "corrupt" Iraqi establishment over lucrative business contracts.

Much of the legal and illegal trade between Jordan and Iraq is reportedly controlled by well-connected "mafia" gangs, with most of the black market cornered by President Saddam Hussein's eldest son, Uday, Arab diplomats said.

Mr Thomas was believed to have run businesses for Saddam and Uday for the past decade. Mr Aouji was a Beirut-based Iraqi businessman

who was also described as close to Saddam and his half-brother, Barzan. One of Mr Aouji's brothers was executed in the 1980s for attempting to hide funds from Saddam, dissidents said. A third Aouji brother, Nazim, is a businessman based mainly in Britain and is also said to be close to Saddam.

It was the second attack on an Iraqi diplomat in Jordan in two weeks, after the attempted shooting of the commercial attaché. That incident stemmed from a family business feud, according to the Jordanian authorities, who arrested several Iraqis. They are awaiting trial.

Relations between Baghdad and Amman have sharply deteriorated since Iraq last month executed four Jordanian students it accused of smuggling car spare parts worth about £500. Some reports said Saddam had suspected Jordan of plotting with a senior Iraqi general to overthrow him. Yet it was most unlikely Saturday's murder was Jordan's revenge for the student executions.

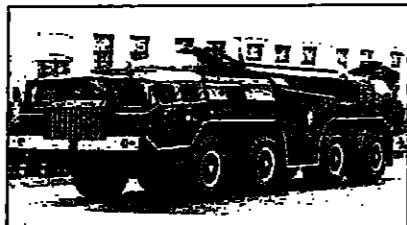
"King Hussein simply would never allow something like this," said an Arab diplomat in Amman. Nor would he have permitted Iraqi dissidents based in Jordan to commit an act so potentially damaging to his kingdom, the envoy added. The possibility that greed has led to squabbling within Saddam's regime comes as he attempted to give the impression of an "impregnable" Iraq to the world.

Last night a Jordanian security source said officials were instructed at the Karameh border post with Iraq to detain all Iraqis for questioning and to have them photographed. All Iraqis arriving at the border post were prevented from crossing into Iraq. The Jordanian measures were also imposed at Amman international airport.



Hikmet al-Hijou, the Iraqi diplomat murdered in Amman, and a Saddam portrait

Baghdad celebrates Scud attacks



Baghdad: Iraq yesterday celebrated the anniversary of its first 1991 Gulf War attack on Israel with a Scud missile, left. Ministers presented awards to scientists responsible for the weapon programme and praised the country for being the first Arab power to hit the Jewish state with rockets.

The Iraqi forces fired 39 Scuds at Israel from the second day of the war. The attacks pitted modified Soviet-designed Scuds against American Patriot anti-missile batteries. (AFP)

Clinton likely to seek trial over Jones sex claims

FROM BRONWEN MADDOX IN WASHINGTON

PRESIDENT CLINTON is expected to conclude that after giving nearly six hours of sworn testimony rebutting the sexual harassment accusations of Paula Jones, he has little to lose by pressing for a full trial in May.

Mr Clinton's advisers are hoping that the long-dreaded encounter, in which he gave his deposition on Saturday, will mark the worst point of the saga, and that, if the details become public, as is probably inevitable, that damage will be minimal.

But in a nation with zero tolerance for political secrets, the knowledge that there now exist nearly six hours of secret videotaped testimony about the President's sexual history is proving irresistible. Americans yesterday appeared torn between feeling that it is undignified for a President to be subject to such scrutiny, and raw curiosity about the details of his answers.

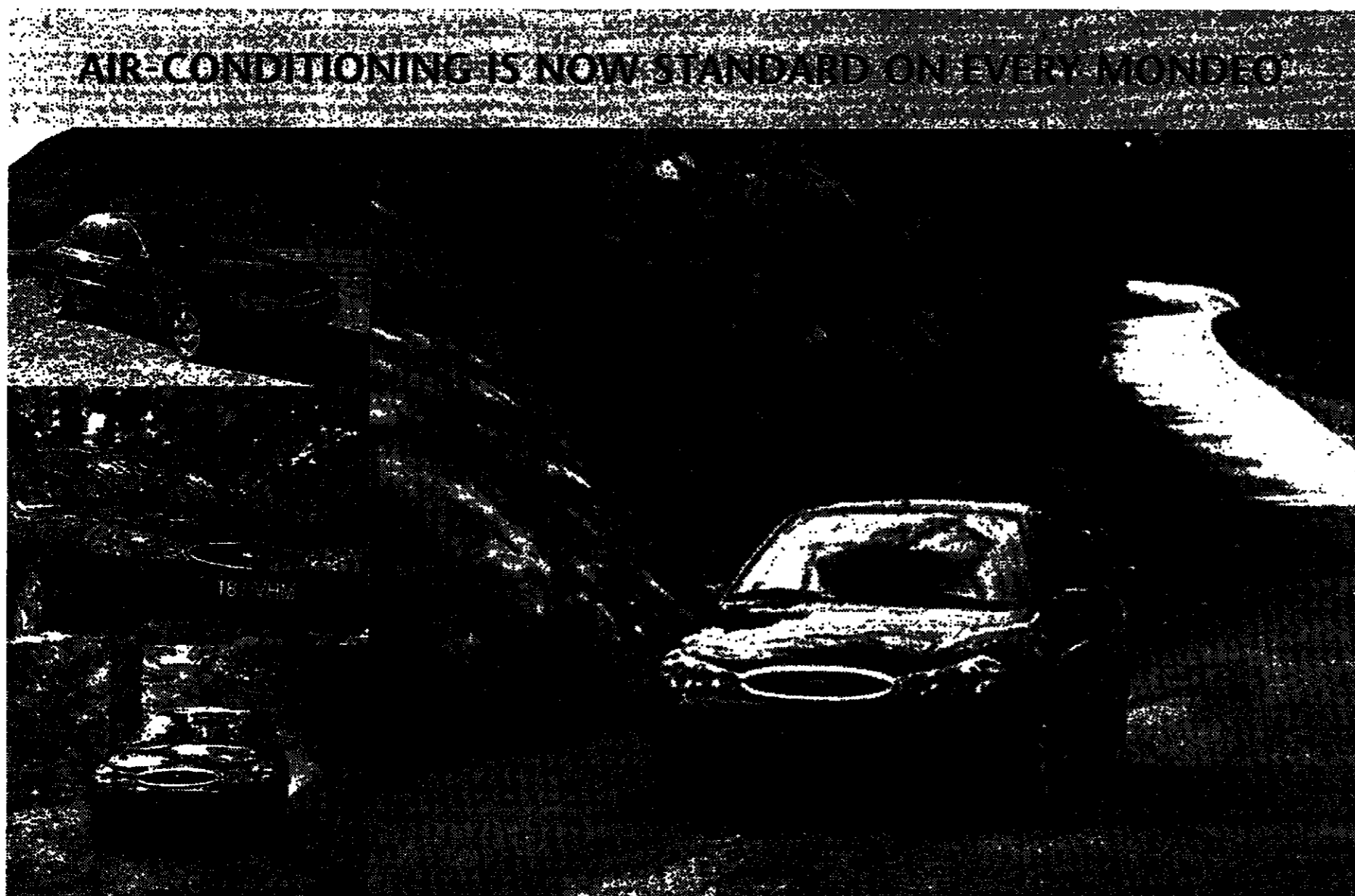
The President is believed to have vigorously denied Mrs Jones's claim that he invited her to a Little Rock hotel suite in 1991 and asked her for oral sex. Mr Clinton, who was Governor of Arkansas at the time, has repeatedly said that he does not remember meeting Mrs Jones or being alone

with her in the hotel room. If the case goes to trial on May 27 as scheduled, and if the President then chooses not to give evidence in person, the videotapes could form part of the evidence. They would be edited by the judge to present only information directly relevant to Mrs Jones's claims. Although they could not be shown outside the courtroom, the transcript would be available.

Under the rules of "discovery", Mrs Jones's lawyers were permitted to ask the President anything which might lead to relevant information. The discovery phase of the trial is due to end by January 31.

According to reports, one question posed to Mr Clinton on Saturday was why he needed a suite at the Excelsior Hotel. Mrs Jones's advisers believe they have evidence that it was booked at short notice, and want to know whether this is because he learnt that Mrs Jones would be in the hotel.

According to reports from a state trooper, Mr Clinton said he needed the room to take a telephone call from President Bush while he was attending a trade show at a convention centre next to the hotel.



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Castro hopes for material reward from papal visit

FROM DAVID ADAMS IN MIAMI AND RICHARD OWEN IN ROME

DESPITE persecuting the Church for most of his 38 years at the helm of the Cuban revolution, Fidel Castro hopes the visit by the Pope this week will give him "a passport to heaven".

During a six-hour television appearance that went on into the early hours, Señor Castro said Cuba had nothing to fear from the Pope and called for huge turnouts at the papal events by Communists and believers alike. President Castro described the Pope as "very friendly, very respectful", and spent 30 minutes reading excerpts from speeches in which the Pope took the same position as Cuba on issues such as poverty and the evils of global capitalism. Despite his battles with Cuba's former Soviet allies in the 1980s, the Pope "is not a reactionary nor an imperialist", Señor Castro said.

As those words suggest, the papal visit appears unlikely to be the political showdown that the past records of both men might indicate. Instead, in the lengthy and continuing negotiations for the visit, the Catholic Church and the Cuban Government have tried to avoid confrontation. But despite Vatican attempts to play down expectations that the

Pope's visit will mark the beginning of the end for one of the world's few remaining Communist regimes, a senior papal aide was quoted yesterday as saying that the regime could not withstand the Pope's "moral force" and was almost certainly doomed.

Cardinal Ricardo María Carles, the Archbishop of Barcelona, who is accompanying the Pope to Havana on Wednesday, said Cuba was the last Marxist bastion in America. "What happened with the Berlin Wall and what happened in Poland could happen there, too," he told the Spanish newspaper ABC. "The papacy has never before had such moral force."

Cuba has agreed to a number of concessions, giving the Catholic Church an unprecedented degree of freedom to spread the faith. Church leaders have returned the Government's goodwill gestures by avoiding direct criticism of Cuba's Communist system and stressing the pastoral nature of the visit.

Even so, the political undercurrents cannot be hidden as both sides size up the long-term impact of the Pope's presence in Cuba. Señor Castro hopes to improve his international image, thereby encouraging much-needed foreign investment and undermining the 30-year-old US economic embargo.

Señor Castro is also nervous about public reaction in Cuba. He devoted much of his television appearance to highlighting the recent results of Cuba's one-sided parliamentary elections, in which the Communists — the only party allowed to present candidates — won 98.5 per cent of the vote.

But while Señor Castro may be happy for the world to see the Pope in Cuba, he seems less sure about letting the people in Cuba see the Pope. Despite elaborate preparations for the four scheduled open-air Masses to be shown live around the world, Cuba has yet to decide if those



The Pope, who visits Cuba this week, frees doves of peace from the balcony of his Vatican apartments yesterday

pictures will be shown on Cuban television.

His reluctance in giving the Pope free rein may lie in his careful study of the Pope's behaviour on other foreign trips. Seldom overtly political, "the Pope is very clever at finding words that are acceptable to the Communists — patriotism, hard work — but defining them in a way to point out the anomalies of Communist doctrine," said Jonathan Kwitny, author of the latest papal biography, *Man Of The Century*.

A good example is the Vatican's official slogan for the Cuba visit, which describes the Pope as "the messenger of truth and hope". Inoffensive enough, it carries a subtle but intentional jab at the lack of hope many Cubans feel about future improvement in their

lives under Communism. "Saying that anywhere else might sound like a pious platitude. But in Cuba it's different," said Bishop Thomas Wenski, the Polish-born director of Catholic Charities in Miami. "The Pope can't change Cuba, but maybe he can change the way Cubans think."

Bishop Wenski said during his visit the Pope will publicly address diverse, seemingly everyday issues such as abortion and family values. "But in the context of Cuba, that's going to be counter-revolutionary. The Government there has tried to replace the family," he said. Havana: Cuban officials honoured Diana, Princess of Wales, on Saturday by inaugurating a memorial garden in her name in old Havana. (AP)

‘The Pope can't change Cuba, but maybe he can change the way Cubans think’

New Austrian cardinal tipped as candidate for pontiff

By RICHARD OWEN

THE Pope yesterday brought the College of Cardinals — the body that will elect his successor — up to full strength with 22 appointments. The new cardinals include Christoph Schönborn, the Archbishop of Vienna, who at 52 — he will turn 53 this week — is the college's youngest member.

He is tipped as a future pontiff, although his relatively liberal credentials appear to run counter to the Pope's sternly conservative

views. The appointments confirm the growing predominance of non-Italians in the college, making it more likely that John Paul II will be followed by another "foreign Pope". He referred to this obliquely, saying that his choices reflected the "universality of the Church".

The Pope, announcing the appointments at his last Sunday Angelus prayers in St Peter's Square before leaving for Cuba on Wednesday, said they would be confirmed on February 21. The

number of cardinals aged less than 80, who meet in conclave after a pontiff's death to elect a successor from among their ranks, should be kept constant at 120, but the Pope has delayed filling vacancies, leading to speculation he wanted to ensure the next conclave would be dominated by those sharing his views.

Nearly 90 per cent of cardinals have been appointed since the Pope was elected in 1978. They now number 168. Of those, 123 — nearly a fifth of whom are Italian

— are eligible to vote. The Pope said he had exceeded the 120 maximum by three to honour several Italians who head Vatican departments, to whom he owed a particular debt. He also kept two names secret, or in pectore, a practice if the churchmen might be persecuted. It is thought the two are in China.

The list included two senior Italians, Archbishop Salvatore De Giorgi of Palermo and Archbishop Dionigi Tettamanzi of Genoa, but is dominated by non-

Italians, including Archbishops Serafim Fernandes de Aranjó of Brazil, Norberto Rivera Carrera of Mexico, Francis Eugene George of Chicago and Antonio María Ronco Varela of Madrid.

Rebel forgiven: The Vatican has lifted its excommunication of Tissa Balasuriya, the Sri Lankan theologian, after intense lobbying (Ruth Gledhill writes). Father Balasuriya, the first theologian to be excommunicated since 1953, incurred papal displeasure for his writings on the Virgin Mary.



Schönborn: has liberal credentials

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Mugabe is forced to abandon land grab

FROM JAN RAATH IN HARARE

PRESIDENT Mugabe has been effectively forced to abandon his mass takeover of white-owned farms in Zimbabwe. The climbdown, under pressure from the European Union and World Bank, is the price for loans to save the country from economic collapse.

The Government has signed undertakings with both institutions committing it to observing constitutional guarantees of respect for property ownership and the right to fair compensation when it embarks on land reform — all of which Mr Mugabe has scorned in the last year of anti-white rhetoric.

It has also agreed to stick to its current budget for buying land to resettle poor black people. The £2.1 million is "enough for a token handful" of farms, a European diplomat said.

Last Friday Michael Laidler, head of the EU delegation in Harare, signed a loan agreement for about \$24 million (£15 million). He said that the series of "promises, undertakings, guarantees and commitments that have been given to secure this tranche are now under scrutiny". It would be "disaster" if Zimbabwe failed to meet them, he said. "Please don't let us down."

The country's economy has been in chaos since Mr Mugabe's order in August to pay guerrilla veterans of Zimbabwe's independence war pension benefits costing £140 million. A list issued on November 28 of 1,480 farms — mostly owned by whites and covering more than 11 million acres — for "compulsory acquisition" dramatically worsened the situation.

Mr Mugabe refused to pay fair compensation for the land

and promised to ignore court proceedings against seizures. Farm union officials said national agricultural output would fall 40 per cent in the first year and that 147,000 workers would be forced off newly resettled farms.

Within two months the currency has collapsed by nearly 50 per cent. The stock market has crashed; investor confidence has evaporated; consumer prices have soared, and workers have staged the most comprehensive strike in the country's history.

Yesterday the independent Sunday Standard reported that the country's banking sector faced major disruption because commercial farmers due to have their land expropriated had stopped payments on their cumulative debt of about £60 million.

On December 31 the Government delivered a letter to the EU signed by Herbert Murerwa, the Finance Minister, and cleared by Mr Mugabe, which listed a series of mostly fiscal undertakings and commitments for land reform. It says the Government will carry out land reform "in a transparent way, in accordance with the rule of law and in terms of the constitution". It also promises that the process will not affect agricultural production or workers' security.

The World Bank has paid out \$120 million after receiving an almost identical letter. Mr Mugabe repeated the assurances in Brussels on January 7, diplomats confirm.

The spectacular collapse of one of Mr Mugabe's most virulent campaigns is another humiliating defeat in the last few months. Observers say it reduces his already questionable continued tenure as head of state.



A firefighter rescues a Peruvian child from a mudslide that engulfed the mountain village of San Mateo at the weekend (Gabriella Gammis writes). Several dozen residents, including at least 20 children, were rescued from

Andeans flee mudslide

their homes. Two neighbouring villages along the Central Andean Highway, 50 miles from Lima, were also covered in a huge

cascade of mud and rocks. Hundreds fled to lower-lying areas with their llamas and other possessions. Rescuers managed to transport the most seriously injured by helicopter. The gales and heavy storms that caused the mudslides continued yesterday. Crops have been destroyed, and three bridges along the highway have collapsed.

Serb-Muslim deal defies Karadzic

FROM TOM WALKER IN BELGRADE

THE most radical reshuffle in Bosnian politics since the civil war has seen Muslim deputies join moderate Serbs to form a majority in the new Bosnian Serb parliament. The Muslims, elected in November by absentee voters cleansed from their Serb territory homes, will travel to parliamentary sessions under special Nato protection.

Milorad Dodik, the moderate Serb who shaped the coalition and will be Prime Minister, said Republika Srpska was at last heading in the right direction. "We do not have anything to fear from the international community," he told the parliament in a stormy session in Bijeljina, still a stronghold for forces loyal to Radovan Karadzic, a war crimes suspect. "We only need to fear our ignorance and our incompetence." Dr Karadzic's hardliners, who

had blocked the parliament's formation for weeks, walked out of the session. Stoking their fury, Mr Dodik said the Serbian Orthodox Church should "stay out of politics". He also talked of privatising the economy and of ending Dr Karadzic's political influence.

Mr Dodik was among the few Bosnian Serbs to distance himself from ethnic cleansing and he consistently opposed links with Slobodan Milosevic in Serbia itself. The reshuffle is a blow for Mr Milosevic, now Yugoslav President, making it more difficult for him to exert real influence in Republika Srpska. Mr Dodik is also an important ally for President Plavsic, who has sometimes looked isolated in her pro-Western policies.

"Karadzic's boys really hate Dodik, which has to be a good sign," said a local

official with the National Democratic Institute, a Washington-based lobby that has worked with Mr Dodik. The Karadzic clique is far from dead, however, as was shown by last week's organised riots that prevented Muslim councillors entering the Serb stronghold of Srebrenica.

White House advisers are set to recommend that the US remove only 1,500 of its 8,500 troops in Bosnia after the June withdrawal deadline (Bronwen Maddox writes). The recommendation, yet to receive the President's backing, emerged from a White House meeting last week, according to *The Washington Times*.

The size of the force, part of the Nato mission, has been debated intensely since Mr Clinton acknowledged last month that some troops would stay.

WORLD IN BRIEF

Rebels capture diamond town

Freetown: Thousands of people are fleeing the Sierra Leone diamond town of Tongohfield after its capture by heavily armed Kamajor hunters in a battle with troops loyal to the military Government, relief agency officials said yesterday.

The traditional hunters took the town — the country's second largest diamond field and a key source of government revenue — on Saturday after wearing down defending forces in a two-week siege. Colonel John Milton, a junta spokesman, said that close to 1,000 hunters had attacked. Refugees were heading for the eastern capital of Kenema, 12 miles away. The Kamajor oppose the junta that toppled President Kabbah in May and have made repeated attacks against the army. (Reuters)

Anti-abortion line defeated

Washington: Republicans overwhelmingly threw out a proposal to deny party funding to candidates who did not support a ban on late, or "partial birth", abortions (Bronwen Maddox writes). The resolution, defeated 114-43 at the Republican National Committee's meeting in Palm Springs, California, threatened to handicap the party in this year's crucial congressional elections.

Killer blast traps coalminers

Moscow: A methane gas explosion at a Russian coalmine in the arctic Vorkuta region killed at least four miners and injured five. About 24 others were trapped, and by last night hopes of finding them alive were diminishing rapidly. The explosion occurred when miners were working at a depth of 2,076m. Twenty-two miners, five of them injured, reached the surface. (AP)

EU team in Algiers talks

London: A European Union delegation headed by Derek Fatchett, a Foreign Office minister, arrives in Algiers today for talks with the military-backed Algerian Government on the country's increasing violence (Michael Binyon writes). The three ministers, from Britain, Austria and Luxembourg, will also meet opposition members of parliament and newspaper editors.

Renior price collapses

Tokyo: A Renior bought for \$78.1 million by a Japanese company at the height of the country's economic boom has been sold at a loss by the financially-strapped firm, a Japanese daily reported. A Daishowa Paper subsidiary has sold *Le Moulin de la Calotte* to an unidentified buyer for \$50 million (£30.6 million). The painting had been offered as collateral for a loan. (Reuters)

El Niño fires hit Tasmania

Hobart: Fires caused by El Niño, the weather phenomenon heightening the nation's hot and dry conditions, flared again in Australia, destroying at least five homes and casting a pall of smoke over Tasmania. Emergency services sealed off some hillside suburbs to prevent people from straying near two large blazes burning on the fringes of Hobart, the state capital. (AP)

Building bridges to peace

Manila: President Ramos of the Philippines has approved a programme to hire former Muslim guerrillas to build 163 cement bridges in southern Philippine areas where they used to destroy them, officials said. Former rebels of the Moro National Liberation Front will be trained by British engineers. (AP)

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Mr and Mrs Allen are aged 48 and 47 and live in Liverpool. They have two children who are at school: James (13) and Sarah (16) who is entering the sixth form this year. Mr Allen is a policeman and Mrs Allen a college lecturer.

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Susan Oliver is aged 29 and single. She lives in Oxford and works as a freelance journalist. Susan intends studying for an MBA while continuing her work and is remortgaging her flat with a loan of £35,000 against a value of £65,000. She will raise capital of £10,000 with her Personal Choice Mortgage and use it to help to fund her studies. The free remortgage package and not having to provide income information were key factors in her decision to switch her mortgage to Bank of Scotland Mortgages Direct.

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Singapore hit by job losses as Asia storm bites

SINGAPORE'S boast that it would remain largely unaffected by Asia's economic storms has taken a severe knock with one of its high-tech flagships laying off workers.

The city state's second-largest employer, Seagate Technology, a US computer disk-drive maker, is dismissing 1,800 employees, about 10 per cent of its workforce, and several hundred contract workers. Strong pricing strategies by South Korean and Japanese disk-drive makers were blamed for the sackings, which cast a pall over trade-driven Singapore yesterday. The Government and unions were trying to find employment for those dismissed.

In this brash, super-confident city state of three million, there is no sense of the kind of panic seen elsewhere in East Asia — no cash-strapped suppliers have committed suicide as in Thailand. But Singaporeans are bracing

James Pringle in Singapore finds the Year of the Tiger may be more like a lamb

themselves for tougher times. Analysts agree that the financial turmoil which has brought misery to much of the region will have some effect. Tozy Tan, the Singaporean Deputy Prime Minister, gave a warning this month of a possible regional recession and "temporary pains".

The traditional Chinese new year celebrations look like being low-key, with families cutting back. The market for traditional Chinese New Year fare is down by as much as 20 per cent. The Year of the Tiger

may come in more like a lamb. Though Singapore — one of Asia's original dragons and a regional centre for trade, transport, banking, tourism and communications — is less dramatically affected than its two larger neighbours, Indonesia and Malaysia, consumers are being more careful with their money.

Singapore has fared relatively well during the six-month Asian economic meltdown, seemingly thanks to strong economic management and massive foreign reserves.

But one analyst said: "Singapore is going to be hurt as Malaysia exports less through the port here. Trade will certainly suffer and growth is going to slow across all sectors of the economy. When you add it all up, it will be quite a serious knock."

Estimates for growth this year average 4.4 per cent, compared to 7 per cent last year, though some forecasts



An Indonesian girl in Jakarta joins about 2,000 Muslims in prayers for an end to the economic crisis. Troops and police remained on alert yesterday in two towns after a spate of lootings by armed gangs and protests against price rises caused by the country's financial problems

put it as low as 1.8 per cent. Shares in companies that build industrial parks and beach resorts have fallen sharply and property shares are weak as Indonesians facing liquidity problems put properties on the market.

Residential prices are falling and share prices are down by 43 per cent compared with a year ago.

The Singapore dollar plummeted 16 per cent against the US dollar in the second half of last year, to its lowest in more

than six years. There are stories of people switching their savings accounts into dollars at local branches of US banks.

Singapore's woes are partly caused by its proximity to Indonesia, which has just

received a \$43 billion bailout from the International Monetary Fund. Many Indonesians send their children to school in this well-disciplined, drug-free city-state, while others visit for medical and dental treatment. The education and medical sectors of the economy are likely to suffer, analysts say.

There are also reports that architectural firms are preparing to cut staff by 25 per cent because of a shortage of new projects.

Cash-strapped Japanese, South Korean, Thai, Indonesian and Malaysian visitors are staying away, hitting the tourist industry upon which Singapore depends heavily.

But what really worries many people in Singapore, where people of Chinese origin make up 77 per cent of the population, is the possibility of anti-Chinese riots breaking out in Indonesia, which could destabilise the region.

Some analysts predict that Singapore's sound fundamentals will insulate the island from Asia's currency crashes. Others, however, say it is paying the price for its once soaring ambitions and hubris in a region that has become a byword for profligate lending, corruption, nepotism and bad management.

Cook treads lightly on trip to China

BY JAMES PRINGLE

ROBIN COOK, the Foreign Secretary, arrives in China today to dance a delicate diplomatic minuet: to raise delicate human rights issues with Beijing while attempting to expand Britain's trade with the Communist giant.

Britain has been using its presidency of the European Union to encourage its 14 fellow member states to adopt a single line on human rights in China.

Mr Cook failed to see the released Chinese dissident, Wei Jingsheng, during his recent visit to Britain. The Foreign Secretary thus rather pulled the rug from under his own feet in terms of his professed interest in rights.

Mr Wei instead met Derek Fitchett, a junior minister at the Foreign Office.

Beijing calls Mr Wei, a former electrician who has spent years in labour camps for calling for "the fifth modernisation — democracy — a criminal, and it seems likely




Wei was rebuffed by Cook on London visit

that Mr Cook felt a meeting would reduce the prospects of progress in his first official visit to China and Hong Kong. Mr Cook will also be emphasising Britain's continuing commitment to the people of Hong Kong. He is likely to express general satisfaction with China's performance in its running of the former British colony, despite the eroding of democratic institutions.

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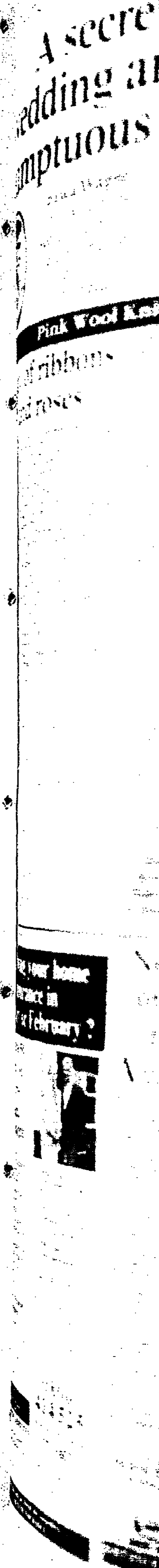
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Young love in the Fifties: Ted Hughes and Sylvia Plath's passion is confirmed by marriage and domesticity

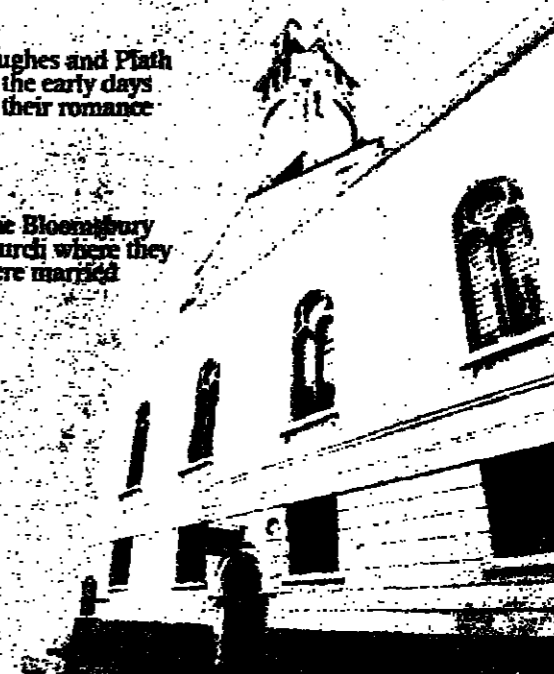
A secret wedding and a sumptuous sofa

Erica Wagner introduces the second part of the literary love affair that turned to tragedy



Hughes and Plath in the early days of their romance

The Bloomsbury church where they were married



Pink Wool Knitted Dress

Day of ribbons and roses

SYLVIA PLATH and Ted Hughes were married at St George the Martyr in Bloomsbury on June 16, 1956. The wedding was "a huge and miraculous secret", as she wrote to her brother Warren two days later. Plath was concerned that the college authorities at Newnham and the Fulbright Commission would cancel her scholarship if they found she had married. "The Victorian virgins wouldn't see how I could concentrate with being married to such a handsome virile man," she wrote. Although the fear proved unfounded, the privacy of the event was strict. Her mother attended the wedding; none of his family did. There were no photographs. To Warren she wrote of the "lovely pink knitted suit dress [Mummy] brought, and me in that and a pink hair ribbon and a pink rose from Ted, standing with the rain pouring outside in the dim little church...". They spent their wedding night in Rugby Street, and then eventually went on to Paris with Aurelia Plath before spending the summer in Benidorm. This was the beginning of a long and eventually tragic quest for a place where the two poets, with the different backgrounds which Hughes makes so clear in these poems, could live in some sort of shared creativity and peace.

In your pink wool knitted dress Before anything had smudged anything You stood at the altar. Bloomsday.

Rain - so that a just-bought umbrella Was the only furnishing about me Newer than three years' tinned. My tie - sole, drab, veteran RAF black - Was the used-up symbol of a tie. My cord jacket - thrice-dyed black, exhausted, Just hanging on to itself.

I was a post-war, utility son-in-law! Not quite the Frog-Prince. Maybe the Swineherd Stealing this daughter's pedigree dreams From under her watchtowered searchlight future.

No ceremony could constrict me Out of my uniform. I wore my whole wardrobe - Except for the odd, spare identical item. My wedding, like Nature, wanted to hide.

However - if we were going to be married It had better be Westminster Abbey. Why not? The Dean told us why not. That is how I learned that I had a Parish Church. St George of the Chimney Sweeps. So we squeezed into marriage finally. Your mother, brave even in this US Foreign Affairs gamble. Acted all bridesmaids and all guests. Even - magnanimity - represented My family. Who had heard nothing about it. I had invited only their ancestors. I had not even confided my theft of you To a closest friend. For Best Man - my squire. To hold the meanwhile rings. We had requisitioned the sexton. Twist of the outrage: He was packing children into a bus. Taking them to the Zoo - in that downpour! All the prison animals had to be patient While we married.

You were transfigured. So slender and new and naked, A nodding spray of wet lilac. You shook, you sobbed with joy, you were ocean depth Brimming with God. You said you saw the heavens open And show riches, ready to drop on us. Levitated beside you, I stood subjected To a strange tense: the spellbound future.

In that echo-gaunt, weekday chancel I see you Wrestling to contain your flames In your pink wool knitted dress And in your eye-pupils - great cut jewels. Jostling their tear-flames, truly like big jewels Shaken in a dice-cup and held up to me.

TOMORROW

Ted Hughes and Sylvia Plath move to America and spend a happy summer in Benidorm. Their marriage begins to surface.

55 Eltisleys

Demons start to niggle

AFTER their summer in Benidorm, Hughes and Plath returned to England, first going to Heptonstall, Hughes's Yorkshire home. Fearful of the loss of Plath's scholarship, they had planned to live apart but finally announced their marriage to the authorities - to congratulations, not wrath. One of Plath's staunchest supporters in the Newnham faculty was Dorothea Krook, her supervisor, referred to in the next poem. Wendy is Wendy Christie, a South African friend of Krook's who sat in on some of Plath's supervisions. Hughes had been asked by the BBC to record some of Yeats's poems; Plath was beginning the second year of her course. Together they found a flat - 55, Eltisleys Avenue, not far from Grantchester Meadows. Despite "ghastly yellow" walls, Plath appeared delighted with their new home: "The rent is £4 a week, plus expenses for gas, light, phone and coal. We'll keep the place extravagantly warm!" She wrote gaily to her mother: "It even has two apple trees in the ragged little back yard and a bay tree. It's got pots and pans, old kitchen silver and a few old sheets for the double bed. I'll make it like an ad out of *House and Garden* with Ted's help...". But *55 Eltisleys*, with its references to Plath's hated "Daddy" and her Bell Jar, hints that already there were darker undercurrents in the marriage. Dorothea Krook would later remark on glimpsing at this time in Plath "the passionate rage which has since come to be recognised as a dominating emotion of her poetry"; and Plath's journals reveal the sexual jealousy that stirs this poem.

Our first home has forgotten us. I saw when I drove past it How slight our lives had been To have left not a trace. When we first moved in there I looked for omens. Vacated by a widow gathered to her family All it told me was: "Her life is over." She had left the last blood of her husband Staining a pillow. Their whole story Hung - a miasma - round that stain. Senility's sour odour. It had condensed Like a grease on the cutlery. It confirmed Your idea of England: part Nursing home, part morgue. For something partly dying, partly dead. Just so the grease-grimed shelves, the tacky, dark walls

Of the hutch of a kitchen revolted you Into a fury of scouring. I studied the blood. Was it mouth-blood, or ear-blood. Or the blood of a head-wound, after some fall? I took possession before Anything of ours had reconditioned That crypt of old griefs and its stale gas Of a dead husband. I claimed our first home Alone and slept in it alone. Only trying not to inhale the ghost That clung on in the breath of the bed. His death and her bereavement Were the sole guests at our house-warming. We splurged ten pounds on a sumptuous Chesterfield Of Prussian blue velvet. Our emergency Kit of kitchen gadgets adapted That rented, abandoned, used-up grubbiness To the shipyard and ritual launching Of our expedition. One mirage Of the world as it is and has to be Seemed no worse than another. Already We were beyond the Albatross. You yourself were a whole Antarctic sea Between me and your girl-friends. You were pack-ice Between me and any possible mention Of my might-have-beens. I had accepted The meteorological phenomena That kept your compass steady. Like polar apparitions only Wendy And Dorothea, by being visionary Fairy godmothers, were forgiven their faces. I pitied your delirium of suspicion. Through the rainbow darkness I plodded. Hand in hand we plodded. For me, that home Was our first camp, our first winter, Where I was happy to stare at a candle. For you, it was igloo comfort. Your Bell Jar centrally heated By a stupefying paraffin heater. But you were happy too, warming your hands At the crystal ball Of your heirloom paperweight. Inside it, There, in miniature, was your New England Christmas. A Mummy and a Daddy, still together Under the whirling snow, and our future.

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Nowhere to run on New York's mean streets

Amy Finnerty, a pretty, petite New Yorker, jogs every day in Central Park. For her and thousands of others in the city, this is a daily ritual, just as a dip in the Ganges would be to devout Hindus.

Imagine my shock, therefore, when Amy told me over dinner the other night that she was thinking of giving jogging a break.

"I can't take it any more," she said wearily. "There's just too much aggression out there." She looked despondent, bereaved even, as if an entire way of life were coming to an end.

Amy was referring to "jogger's rage", a disturbing new genre of bad behaviour that is sweeping through New York like a plague. A form of road rage on two legs, it manifests itself daily on the city's parks and pavements. Belligerent runners are now asserting a right to joggers' territory in a manner not unlike Hitler's Panzer divisions.

That morning, Amy, who was jogging slowly on a rather narrow track, had been shoved aside by a hostile man, who bellowed: "Get outa my way, ya stupid woman!" She

fell heavily to the ground, her ankle twisted and her confidence bruised, while her assailant simply jogged on.

Her experience is a common one. A male friend was jostled last week by a large man jogging with an equally large dog. My friend, who is training for next year's New York Marathon, is now reviewing his jogging future.

He told me his tale of woe: "I was trotting along at a civilised pace when this brute just pushed past me, shoulder first," he says. "He swore at me for being in the way. When I responded with an 'I say, old chap, there's no need for that' - or words to that effect - he threatened to set his dog on me. And the bloody dog growled, as if on cue."

Another friend, Geoff Stead, is Australian and thicker-skinned than most, but even he was unhappy at being a victim last week of a perverse form of jogger's aggression.

"My path was blocked by a family of four - Mum, Dad and two teenage sons - all running abreast," he says. "They wouldn't let me pass. When I tried to squeeze around them they blocked my way, and seemed to slow down deliberately to get a rise out of me. This carried on for five minutes, then I pulled to a halt and said 'You're a generous bunch, aren't you?' To which the mum said: 'You'll just have to come back when we're not here, won't you?' And they laughed like hyenas."

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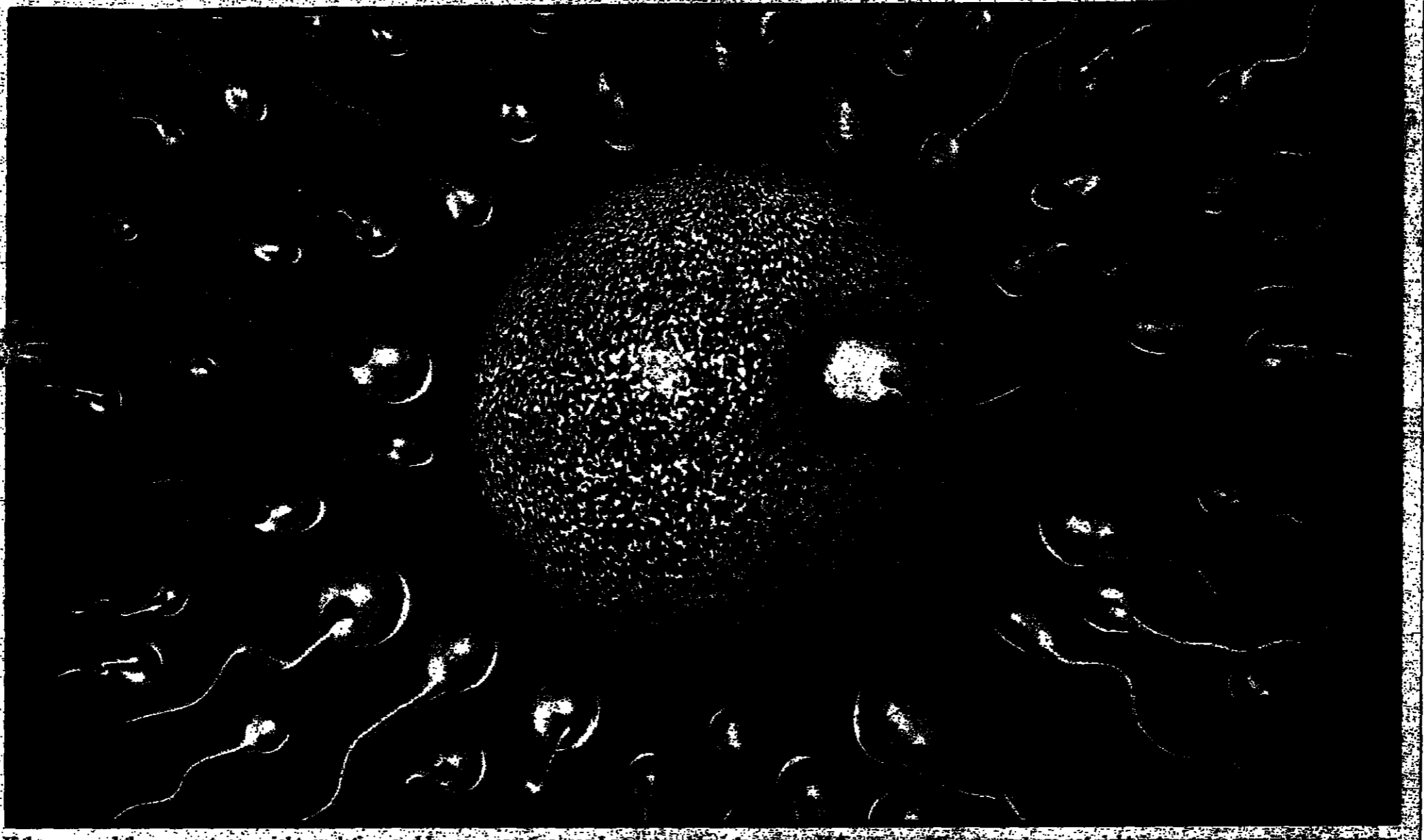


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Infidelity: women's secret weapon

BABY WARS

Why do some couples struggle to have a baby? Why are 10 per cent of children not the offspring of their supposed fathers? In a first extract from their extraordinary new book, *Baby Wars*, Dr Robin Baker and Elizabeth Oram explain the untold secrets of conception



If the man and the moment seem right, ovulation, and hence conception, can be triggered by intercourse. If the man and the moment are not right, intercourse may inhibit ovulation

According to the doctor, it was good news. Her tubes were clear, her womb looked healthy, she was ovulating and her hormone profile was as it should be. He had perhaps slightly fewer sperm than expected and slightly more with strange-shaped heads, but nothing that wasn't within the normal range for a fertile man. As far as the doctor could see there was nothing to stop them having a baby in the normal way, and all he could recommend was that they should keep on trying.

"Why not take a holiday?" was his parting shot. "Go and enjoy yourselves." They were very quiet on the way home, relief and confusion mingling in their minds. Both felt an irrational tinge of disappointment that the other hadn't been found to have a problem. The prospect of carrying on trying, with no explanation of what they might be doing wrong, filled them with dismay — and boredom.

The weekend before their holiday, they had a visit from their out-of-town friends and their two children. They were passing through and would stay overnight. Invariably, whenever the two couples met and the children were in bed, the women would get slightly drunk, and their partners a lot more so. When the men were slumped in their chairs, asleep, the two women talked about former lovers.

After briefly drifting off to sleep, the woman got out of bed, showered, pulled on a bathrobe and went downstairs to start on the messy kitchen they had abandoned the night before. Fifteen minutes later her partner appeared, herded noisily along

by their visitors' children who were urging him to take them to the shop. He insisted on having a cup of coffee first. As he drank, the children's mother entered the kitchen. She too felt like a walk, so she would go along with them. Scarcely had they closed the door when the children's father, in a hastily donned tracksuit, joined the hostess in the kitchen. As the woman pulled on her rubber gloves to deal with the mess in the sink, he made them both some coffee. They spoke little, relaxed in each other's company after so many years' acquaint-

ance. He asked where she wanted her coffee. Still busy at the sink, she indicated the window ledge in front of her. He came up behind her and, losing his balance slightly, steadied himself by resting his hands on her waist and hips. The unexpected contact and proximity sent an immediate surge of sexual chemistry through both their bodies.

They both froze, confused by the events of the past few seconds. He eased her back against him and made the faintest of movements — enough to send her a signal, but little enough for them both to pretend it hadn't happened, if necessary. After a moment, it was the woman who broke the silence.

"Do it," she said, without moving her body an inch. "Just do it." There was more anger than passion in her quiet but determined voice. Three minutes later, the whole process was over. They were just decent and moving apart when the children ran into the kitchen, and thanks to their boisterous nature the unease of the unfaithful pair went unnoticed. After lunch, the visitors set off on their journey and the other two returned to their normal routine. A few days later they went on holiday. They had sex at least every day and felt happier and more positive about their relationship than they had for some time.

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Two weeks after returning home he woke to the sound of her being sick, and that same day a test confirmed that she was pregnant. They were all parents now — or so they thought...

So what happened?
Why should a couple with no apparent medical problems suddenly conceive after nearly two years of failure? On the surface, they were co-operating as much as they possibly could. Any disagreement, therefore, had to be subconscious, and when we look at the way things turned out, there is more than a hint that the woman's body was playing a different and more overt game than the man's. Both consciously and subconsciously, he had been doing his best to get his partner to conceive; and consciously the woman had been doing her best to cooperate. Unknown to either of them, however, her body may have been delaying conception, waiting for the right moment, and perhaps even the right man. It is more than likely that the genetic father of the child born at the end of her conception campaign was not her partner, but her friend's partner — he with whom she

returns home briefly (on week-end leave, perhaps), are all more likely than routine intercourse to lead to conception on these days of the cycle. This does not mean that a woman's long-term partner cannot also trigger her to ovulate through routine intercourse. It is just that she is less likely to respond so positively to him under routine circumstances than she is to him, or to other men, in one-off encounters.

In addition to this apparent ability to ovulate in response to opportunity, a woman's hormones make her more receptive to a lover, as opposed to her regular partner, while her body is "on hold". As well as being much more likely to have sex with a lover during the holding period, a woman is programmed by her hormones to change her behaviour. Studies of the amount of time women spend on their own reveal that whereas those who have no long-term partner show little change during the menstrual cycle, those with long-term partners spend less time with them and more time exploring new places during their most fertile phase. And, while out of sight of their partner, they dress and behave more provocatively.

Researcher in a Viennese discotheque took pictures of women and measured both the amount of bare skin they were revealing and how tight-fitting and transparent were their clothes. The women then had their saliva tested for oestrogen level. Those who had long-term partners but had left them at home for a night out "with the girls" were much more likely to dress provocatively during the fertile phase of their cycle, when oestrogen levels were high, than at other times. Women without long-term partners at home showed no such variation.

The implication is that until a woman has a long-term partner to support her, she does not seek one-off intercourse during the "on



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to seek out the best genes



It should not be surprising that a woman from time to time considers a situation in which infidelity might enhance her reproductive success

hold" phase of her cycle. A woman supported by a partner is much more likely to be driven by her body chemistry to try to attract the attention of other men during her "on hold" phase. Moreover, given the chance, she is more likely to collect sperm from those men, and to conceive.

Why might the woman we met earlier have been so much more keen to ovulate and conceive once she had collected sperm from another man? Ten years or so earlier, she and her partner had chosen to live together and share their lives, and since then they had been through so much together in the name of conception. Why renege on him now? Sadly, for those who would wish things were different, natural selection has predisposed people's bodies to be selfish and single-minded; it has no mechanism for evolving true altruism. We are the descendants of people whose bodies put their own reproduction first, and we have inherited our ancestors' selfishness. Natural selection has favoured those bodies which

In seeking the father of your children, one option is to choose the best available long-term partner and then rely on infidelity to obtain the best genes

even while co-operating with a long-term partner, are continuously alert for the opportunity to enhance their reproductive success just that bit more than they can with that partner. If such an opportunity arises, the body does its best to take advantage, whatever the consequences for the partner. It should not be surprising that a woman occasionally encounters a situation in which infidelity might enhance her reproductive success. On the one hand she has a need for a man who can help her to raise children. On the other, she needs genes that, combined with her own, will produce attractive, fertile and successful children. Some of her difficulties arise from having a wider choice of gene

providers than of long-term partners. It takes only minutes to collect a man's genes, but years of co-operation from him to raise children. Women seek different attributes in short-term and long-term partners. And the greater choice of short-term gene-providers opens up two main options. One is to find a man who, though neither the best provider of genes nor the best partner, is the best available compromise she can attract. The other is to choose the best available long-term partner and then rely on infidelity to obtain the best genes. About 10 per cent of children are not the offspring of their

supposed fathers. Some men have a higher chance of being cuckolded than others, and those of low wealth and status fare worst. Figures range from 1 per cent in high-status areas of Switzerland and the US through 5 to 6 per cent for moderate-status males in Britain and the US, to 10 to 30 per cent for lower-status males in Britain, France and the US. And the men most likely to be cuckolded are those of higher status. Anthropological studies show the same pattern. In many societies men of higher wealth and status obtain partners earlier, sometimes obtain more partners, reproduce earlier, are less likely to be cuckolded and are more likely to cuckold other males.

There is, not surprisingly, a similar pattern for female infidelity. Women paired to wealthier, higher-status men have little to gain from infidelity and much to lose. Those paired with poor, lower-status men, on the other hand, have little to lose and perhaps much to gain, especially if they are unfaithful with men from higher up the social scale. The events that befell our man and woman clear up another conundrum from the early stages of the couple's conception campaign: the enigma of sexual cryptis. Once sex has become a duty rather than a pleasure, many couples have cursed their inability to know when the woman is most fertile. To many, sexual cryptis seems at first one of natural selection's most mischievous tricks. But in design-

ing the female body to hide its fertile phases, it has handed women one of their most powerful weapons in the control of their reproductive destinies. This way they have greater freedom to choose the genetic fathers of their children than if they advertised their fertility. But why has it hidden the information even from her conscious mind? The answer is that for a woman to be able to conceal her fertility from men most convincingly, she needs to conceal it from herself. Then she is less likely to give off signals inadvertently.

This is an edited extract from *Baby Wars*, by Robin Baker and Elizabeth Cram, to be published on February 5 (£12.99, Fourth Estate). Times readers can obtain *Baby Wars* for £11.99 from The Times Bookshop on 0200 134 439.

He looks for symmetry, she wants security

MEN SELECT women for their health, fertility and fidelity — though not consciously, of course. And although when they see a woman for the first time they do not immediately remark on her potential for bearing and raising children, the features that their bodies are programmed to find attractive are those that reflect this potential.

Unlike a woman, a man uses similar criteria whether he is selecting a partner or a lover: with both, his primary concern is with looks and behaviour. An important feature is body shape, particularly the ratio of waist to hip. Irrespective of a woman's size — in some cultures men prefer thin women, in others fat — they prefer someone whose waist is significantly narrower than her buttocks. The explanation is that this preferred shape reflects a good hormone balance, good resistance to disease and strong fertility.

In addition to shape, men all over the world also respond strongly to clear eyes, healthy hair and skin, and the symmetry of the face and body. Again, features that are strong indicators of health and hence fertility. Men of most cultures also respond to breast size and shape, though preferences vary and there is no simple link between the appearance of a woman's breasts and her ability to lactate and sustain a child. Finally, men respond strongly to character traits that might indicate potential fidelity — these, however, are relatively easy to fake, at least for short periods.

In choosing a man to help to raise her children, a woman is primarily concerned with the security he

can offer and is only secondarily impressed by looks. In choosing a short-term partner for sex, however, looks are much more important — clear eyes, healthy skin and hair, firm buttocks, broad shoulders, quick wit and intelligence.

One of the most interesting features of the new research on mate choice and attractiveness in human beings and other animals is the importance of disease, and resistance to it, during early life. Not only do diseases influence the "glow" of the eyes, hair and skin, they also influence their symmetry.

Throughout life, the body is exposed to attack by a myriad of micro-organisms, and because these rarely attack both sides of the body equally, their presence tends to promote asymmetry. The fewer diseases people encounter and the more genetic resistance they have to the diseases they do encounter, the more symmetrical they remain. The more successful they are in avoiding and resisting accidents and diseases, the greater will be their genetic "fitness", compared with their less symmetrical contemporaries.

The underlying principle of attractiveness is therefore quite straightforward. People are genetically programmed to find attractive those features indicating that the target of their attention is healthy and fertile and possesses "good genes". These "good genes" will be passed on to any children two parties may have together.

Studies of other animals, ranging from birds to insects, have shown that, too, are responding to similarly informative features, and that symmetry is one of the most potent for all.



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You can, it seems, take the millennium out of Christianity, but you cannot. I believe, take Christianity out of the millennium. Let's leave the dome out of it and look at the general picture.

We are told that 2000 is just a number. It is a handy number, being round and as full of zeros as a calendar can get. It also marks some sort of achievement — let us not be too specific about it — and therefore provides excuse enough to trigger off a celebration. I love celebrations and the fundamental trick is that they ought to be about something — birthday, Christmas, welcoming party, an event.

In that sense, 2000 being the marker for a new millennium gives us a clean excuse to roll out the barrel. What scale it should be on is a matter of taste or purse, but the dawn of the third millennium is worth a toast. In this view, 2000 is simply about Time. And if a small voice inquires "The millennium of what?" or "Whose millennium is it anyway?", there are ways

For Christians, 2000 is not just a number

to bundle such questions off the platform.

It could be argued that although this millennium comes courtesy of Christianity there is no reason to let that interfere with the celebration. After all, Christianity took over many a pagan festival — Christmas itself, Easter, some saints' days — as well as other features characteristic of pagan religions. Moreover, if the pagans could be incorporated, the heathens could be, and on the whole were, totally ignored in these matters. So what can one say in Christianity's defence if the vast number of heathens today choose to ignore the lesser band of Christians?

There is also the proposition that in these islands, described by that evangelical Pope Gregory 1,500 years ago as being "at the edge of the known world", we have not

been Christian for the full 2,000. Perhaps only Christians in Israel could claim that Joseph of Arimathea may have reached Ireland, certain Christian traces may be found inside Roman settlements, and who knows whether the True Cross beat in the heart of one of Caesar's centurions? But, by and large, being at the outer rim of the then pond of the world the ripples reached us later. So literalists can say that 2000 does not correctly describe the British experience.

Then we come to the multi-religious argument, which says that Britain today is not exclusively Christian. It is also significantly Jewish, Muslim, Sikh, Hindu and Buddhist. To pick out one strand from the many which make up the religious part of this country would, it is argued, be unfair. Everyone must be included.

And yet... the year 2000 is



indisputably there because it marks the widely acknowledged birth of Jesus Christ, believed by Christians to be the son of God. Compared with that, Greenwich Mean Time, for all its significance,

is a convenience only, one that at the last moment we wrenched away from the French, and of the utmost importance over many years for many reasons. But even those who most claim that importance — and might even claim further that it has been more use to the world than Christianity itself — surely cannot argue that it would have no significance whatsoever on New Year's Eve 1999 had Christ not been born 2,000 years before that?

For many other religions 2000 is meaningless, but not for Christians. For the past 1,500 years this country has striven to be Christian, with some decades and centuries more successful than others. Christianity has informed our civilisation and culture in every aspect. It has been abused by the wicked, manipulated by the

cynical and ignored by unbelievers. I cannot, though, subscribe to the emphatic view of the novelist A.S. Byatt who says that she is anti-Christian "because Christianity has done such terrible things". I find it difficult to draw up any meaningful balance which would compare the benefits with the disadvantages, but benefits have undoubtedly flowed. We might have been better off without Christianity, but looking at other societies, it is certain we could have done much worse without it.

And still, although reduced in these islands, Christianity continues to live and flourish. And this, surely, is one of the moments at which it can claim pole position, or even ownership.

I fear that the reason for the reluctance to give Christianity its due in 2000 might have less to do with religion and more to do with

what I have written about several times in this column — the state of our confidence in ourselves and our history. We are very reluctant to pick up those pieces from our past which still have the most extraordinary richness and with them refreshen a positive present.

We have been in some manner or other a Christian country for as long as most. Yes, it has often seemed the devil's work, but at its best Christianity in Britain has brought us saints, martyrs, scholars and pilgrims, Christian soldiers, teachers, preachers and millions of those who would call themselves ordinary. It has brought us music, paintings, buildings of profound charm and great magnificence, and communities sometimes civilised by its touch.

Surely we should not be too feeble or ashamed to stand up for one of the great days on which we can respect the best of that tradition, and let Christianity have its celebration unclouded?

Lather but few laughs

What's in a name? There is less spoken dialogue in Sondheim's "musical" than there is in Mozart's "grand opera". *The Magic Flute*. Even the most accomplished Queen of Night might find the rhythms of Mrs Lovett's "Worst pies in London" tricky to negotiate, and Sweeney's revenge aria is as hair-raising — and pivotal — as those that permeate the operas of Verdi. There's not much point in arguing whether *Sweeney* belongs on Broadway or in an opera house: it's as authentic a piece of 20th-century music-theatre as Britwistle's *Gawain*, serious in intent, intricately and carefully composed, and worth the attention of any opera company and its audience.

Opera North's new production is the first operatic staging



in this country, in the wake of Drury Lane, the National Theatre and — best of all to date — the Half Moon. And it is defiantly "operatic" in feel, big orchestra (occasionally covering the voices), big chorus (tending to sing notes rather than words), conducted with devotion by the experienced James Holmes, who risks some neo-operatic tempos in a long (90-minute) first act inviting a few more nips and tucks. The first hour is unrelentingly sombre.

So is David McVicar's production, in traditional industrial decor by Michael Vale. But *Sweeney* was written for

Broadway, and there was almost as much macabre humour in the Hal Prince production as there was in the classic Tod Slaughter version of the original play back in the 1930s, final flowering of the old melodrama tradition. Here the big comic waltz finale, *Priest*, comes as more of an abrupt change of mood than it ought to. One guiltily longed for an Anthony more like a musical-comedy sailor than the subdued Karl Daymond, a daffier Johanna than Lucy Schaefer's rather too knowing *ingénue*, and more showbiz pizzazz in their duets.

Maybe financial stringency dictated sets that have to be changed by chorus-members rather than whizz around on trucks, but there was no discernible reason for "observers" lurking on the fringe even of scenes where solitude is crucial — both conceits gave McVicar's production a fuzzy, uncertain edge. The surface action, is grim, but must it be so consistently joyless? The audience laughed merrily at the serial throat-slitting in the second act, but I am not sure they were meant to.

Much more guiltily one longed for actors rather than singers, or for singers directed in such a way as to sustain so sombre a reading. If *Sweeney* is, in good operatic tradition, about the dehumanising properties of both revenge and romantic love, then we need a protagonist to convey the workings of his mind more clearly than Steven Page did, and a Mrs Lovett who doesn't declare her hand as openly as Beverly Klein did in her very first scene with the man she loves. Neither character goes on a journey. But Page, a noted Don Giovanni, sings the role as powerfully as you could hope to hear, and Klein exploits her healthy showbiz chest voice to fine effect.

Malcolm Rivers sings the Judge's aria so well as to prevent me (almost) thinking it should be cut, and Christopher Saunders is vocally touching but too Artful Dodgerish as the artless Tobias. Gillian Kirpatrick (*Beggar Woman*), Adrian Thompson (Pirelli) and Stephen Briggs (Beadle) are first-rate. Yes, *Sweeney* is a serious work but, as in *Threepenny Opera*, its impact would be far greater with a few more laughs.

RODNEY MILNES



Something for the weekend? Sweeney Todd (Steven Page, centre) at the shaving contest

Rattle's successor shows his quality

One of the most encouraging aspects of Sakari Oramo's conducting is the way that it has changed over the last couple of years. Of course, it must do wonders for a young musician's self-confidence to be appointed to succeed someone like Sir Simon Rattle with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. That must account for some of what has happened to him.

But if he goes on like this the CBSO will soon have another star on its hands. Oramo has already developed from the studiously competent conductor he was on his first appearance in Symphony Hall to the clearly authoritative director of this particular event.

It would be exaggerating to suggest that he has been transformed into a virtuoso. He retains his straightforward, classical technique and remains as serious and as helpful as he was before. There is, on the other hand, a new freedom in his movements, a newly evident joy in the sound he is creating, a loss of inhibition in reflecting whatever is dramatic or inspiring in the music he is conducting.

The most striking item in that respect was Oramo's highly coloured interpretation of Sibelius's Second Symphony, which retained its integrity because the pressure was applied at just those points where the structural profile requires it. There was no brooding in what is usually assumed to be the authentic Finnish manner. But if the interpretation was lacking something in atmosphere, it certainly lacked nothing in either long-term

effect or the orchestra's bar-by-bar commitment.

Demonstrating his abilities in two other major areas of the repertoire, Oramo opened the concert with a work by his Finnish contemporary Magnus Lindberg and offered Mozart's Symphony No 39 as its centrepiece. Anyone who feared that the Mozart might be squeezed out by the bigger pieces on either side must have been relieved to observe the resilience of the sound Oramo secured here. The speeds were quick, the lines sensitively but firmly drawn, the scaled-down orchestral forces still sufficient to register the magnitude of the harmonic events which are so distinctive to this particular score.

But for sheer technique, in conducting and orchestral playing, nothing was more impressive than the performance of Lindberg's *Arena*. Written for a conductor's competition in 1995 (and first performed in this country by Vasily Sinaisky and the BBC Philharmonic at a Cheltenham Festival concert a year later), it has the great virtue that it is just as brilliant as it is complicated. It is also highly rewarding in that the shifting mass of motivic detail and flickering instrumental colours do eventually stabilise into sustained and convincingly conclusive melody. Sibelius did it no better.

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Genius who looked back in anguish

EACH January the BBC Symphony Orchestra hosts a Barbiican weekend focused on a 20th-century composer. It is always a fascinating historical as well as musical exploration. Composers have not been exempt from the horrors and upheavals of our ebbing century, and in many instances their music was shaped by harrowing circumstances.

Bohuslav Martinů, this year's subject, is a case in point. The BBC calls him "the great Czech composer", which is not quite the truth. He was certainly born in Bohemia, at the top of a church tower, oddly enough. But his adulthood was spent in exile — first by choice, in the chic Paris of

the 1920s and 1930s; then by necessity in America, as Nazis and Communists successively usurped his homeland.

Those wanderings probably account for his sophisticated but restlessly shifting style. But in later years a yearning for his homeland, expressed through sudden eruptions of Czech rhythms and cadences, shaped Martinů's music. And when that homesickness became tangled up in a doomed adulterous affair with an expatriate Czech student it was the breaking of Martinů the man, but the making of Martinů the composer. It turned a prolific but underwhelming craftsman into a tragic genius.

So Martinů was not a "great composer" in the groundbreaking fashion of Stravinsky. But he did write some great music scores that mirror the anguish of the century. Two were superbly performed here by the BBC SO conducted by Jiří Bělohlávek. On Friday night the *Fantasies symphoniques* proved to be an astonishing piece, its three movements full of dark, surg-

ing melodies that fight their way out of thickets of throbbing energy. The distance Martinů had travelled by 1953, intellectually and emotionally, could be measured by comparing this masterpiece with the energetic but ultimately unsatisfying First Cello Concerto (1950), passionately delivered here by Raphael Wallfisch.

But even the *Fantasies symphoniques* pales besides Martinů's last and greatest work, *The Greek Passion* — the opera he made from Nikos Kazantzakis's novel *Christ Recrucified*, about a passion play that gradually turns into violent reality as Greek villagers face an influx of homeless refugees. The score is

both startlingly dramatic and intensely beautiful.

It has its Greek moments, particularly in the liturgical choruses (sonorously declaimed in Saturday's concert performance by the BBC Symphony Chorus), but mostly it is pure Czech in its directness, lyrical ardour and blazing climax. With a fine cast led by David Rendall as the Christ-figure Manolios, Susan Chilcott as the "Magdalene" Katerina and Clive Bayley as the malevolent "high priest" Grigorios, Bělohlávek steered the tragedy to a stunning conclusion.

RICHARD MORRISON

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SANDRINGHAM January 17: The Queen was represented by the Lord Whitty (Lord in Waiting) at the Service of Thanksgiving for the life of Sir John Coulson (formerly Her Majesty's Ambassador to Sweden) which was held in Winchester Cathedral this morning.

University news

Go-ahead for maths centre at Cambridge A new building for Cambridge University's renowned Faculty of Mathematics has been given planning consent.

Dinner

The Chambers of D.J.M. Campton Dinner was given by members of First Floor Chambers, 11 Stone Buildings, Lincoln's Inn, in the Marquis de Montalain Suite at the Montcalm Hotel, London, on January 16, 1998, in honour of John Campton and to mark his retirement from the Bar of England and Wales after 41 years in practice.

Birthdays today

Mr Julian Barnes, writer, 52; Miss Nina Bowden, novelist, 73; His Honour Sir Jonathan Clarke, 68; Mr Michael Crawford, actor and singer, 56; Mr Bernard Dunstan, painter, 78; Mrs Dolly Parton, country music singer and actress, 52; Señor Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, former Secretary-General, United Nations, 78; Mr Bryan Pringle, actor, 63; Sir Simon Rattle, conductor, 45; Mr Malcolm Reilly, rugby league coach, 50; the Duke of Albuca, 59; Mr John Spencer, former Headmaster, Berkhamstead School, 75; Sir John Stanley, MP, 56; Mr Gary Tiley, MEP, 48; Mr Keith Topley, former Senior Master, Queen's Bench Division, 62; Richard, Duke of York, 50; the Earl of Weymouth and March, KT, 80.

A pocket aid for worldly opinions

By JOHN VINCENT

A 300-YEAR-OLD pair of pocket globes that fit into the palm of the hand are expected to fetch up to £150,000 at auction. The rare globes — one terrestrial, the other celestial — are by the renowned Italian maker P. Vincenz Coronelli and measure about three inches in diameter.



Catherine Southam of Sotheby's with one of the Coronelli miniature globes

Forthcoming marriages

Mr F.C. Baring and Miss C.E.M. Potter. The engagement is announced between Francis, eldest son of Mr and Mrs N.H. Baring, of Ham, Wiltshire, and Charman, eldest daughter of Mr and Mrs C.F.R. Potter, of Old Swinford Hospital School, Stourbridge.

Nature notes

GREENFINCHES are making their wheezing spring call in the tree tops, a month earlier than usual. The males are now a rich green, and their yellow wing-patches are becoming brighter.



The little owl

Some white dead nettle plants also have flowers on them, with tall hoods and a deft lower lip. In the leaf mould beneath hedges, there is plenty of hidden life, with some ground beetles lying low in the daytime and scurrying about at night, earwigs and other beetles hibernating, and hedgehogs also sleeping off a dryad 3.78% N R Lambert to

Appointments in the Forces

Royal Navy and Royal Marines COMMODORE: J A Burch, DGA (N) SU Bath, to be promoted Rear Admiral and to be Director General Aircraft (Navy) on March 14; D P Lashmore, to be Director of Naval Operations on March 14; S C Thornhill to be Director of Naval Operations on March 14.

Anniversaries

BIRTHS: James Watt, inventor, Greenock, 1736; Johann Bode, astronomer, Hamburg, 1747; August Comte, philosopher, Montpellier, 1798; Robert E. Lee, Confederate C-in-C in the American Civil War, Stratford, Virginia, 1807; Alfred Noyes, poet, New York, 1899.

Memorial services

Sir John Coulson The Queen was represented by Lord Whitty at a service of thanksgiving for the life of Sir John Coulson, former diplomat, which was held on Saturday in Winchester Cathedral. The Dean of Winchester officiated, assisted by the Rev James Anderson, who led the prayers.

Michael Cummings

A memorial service for Michael Cummings will be held at St Bride's, Fleet Street, on Wednesday, January 28, at noon. Captain Geoffrey Stanning A memorial service for Captain Geoffrey Stanning, RN, was held on Saturday in Marlborough College Chapel. The Rev James Dickie, Senior Chaplain, officiated, assisted by the Rev Douglas Dales, Chaplain, and the Rev Henry Curran, Rector of Marlborough.

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OBITUARIES

GEORGE POTTINGER



George Pottinger, civil servant, died on January 15 aged 81. He was born on June 11, 1916. The name of George Pottinger will forever be associated with the Poulson corruption scandal...

of his trial at Leeds Crown Court, compared Poulson, somewhat injudiciously, to Napoleon. Poulson benefited from the sophistication of an experienced civil servant...

GULZARI LAL NANDA



Gulzari Lal Nanda, twice Prime Minister of India, died on January 15 at the age of 99. He was born on July 4, 1898.

Then, in the small hours of January 11, 1965, word came to Delhi from Tashkent that the Prime Minister, Lal Bahadur Shastri, had died there a few hours after signing the Tashkent declaration with President Ayub and Premier Kosygin...

LIEUTENANT-COLONEL TONY DUNCAN



Lieutenant-Colonel Tony Duncan, OBE, golfer and administrator, died on January 3 aged 83. He was born in Cardiff on December 10, 1914.

the 1939 Amateur, the first Welshman to do so, before losing to Alex Kyle. He became the first Welshman to captain a Walker Cup team, losing 9-3 to the US in 1953...

THE HON PENELOPE PIERCY



The Hon Penelope Piercy, CBE, missionary and civil servant, died on December 27 aged 81. She was born on April 15, 1916.

Japanese, and she had to take a roundabout route across the Atlantic, through the Panama Canal and across the Pacific. From Rangoon she travelled by lorry along the dangerous Burma Road to Kunming...

Benn, where her main task was to make the machine-tool industry competitive. She also worked on early plans for the Channel Tunnel. She retired with the rank of under-secretary, having been appointed CBE in 1968.

Latest wills

Jessie Bentley, of London N2, left estate valued at £633,757 net. She left £5,000 each to British O.R.T. Imperial Cancer Research Fund, Imperial Cancer, £5,000 to North London Hospice, and £3,000 to the North Western Reform Synagogue.

TRAVELS IN THE AIR

We will endeavour to give our readers some idea of the difficulties, pleasures and dangers of aerial navigation by following an imaginary aeronaut from the earth to the clouds and back to the earth again.

ON THIS DAY

January 19, 1871 An extract from a review of Travels in the Air by James Glaisher, who with Henry Cozzell made a number of balloon ascents in 1862-66.

NEWS

Adams for urgent talks at No 10

Gerry Adams is to meet the Prime Minister at Downing Street for the second time after the murder of another Roman Catholic in Ulster put further strain on the IRA ceasefire.

The Sinn Fein president asked for the meeting to express his deep opposition to the new Anglo-Irish blueprint for Northern Ireland's future. But the killing of a fourth Catholic in three weeks by loyalists has lent it extra urgency. Pages 1, 2, 21

Saddam calls on 1m for holy war

Iraq has ordered the training of one million people in preparation for a jihad or holy war to be launched if trade sanctions are not lifted against Baghdad. The order is part of President Saddam Hussein's attempts to rally Arab support in his confrontation with the United Nations over weapons inspections. Pages 1, 10

Voting reform

Electronic and universal postal votes are being considered by ministers in a shake-up of procedures that could end the tradition of the secret vote in the ballot box. Page 1

Blair-Brown tensions

There was growing alarm in the Government over attempts by allies of both men to drive a wedge between Tony Blair and Gordon Brown. Page 2

Broccoli boy

A boy of four, allergic to 95 per cent of foods, may have to live the rest of his life on broccoli, cauliflower, chips, bread and bananas if doctors cannot find a cure for his food allergies. Page 3

Poet hailed

British and Irish poets said *Birthdays Letters* confirmed Poet Laureate Ted Hughes's place as one of the great figures in English literature. Pages 5, 15

Spiritual diet

Women saints who starved are proving to be an inspiration in a study of the "theology of dieting" which posits that dieters would find it easier to lose weight if they focused on spirituality. Page 4

Ruthless poachers

Deer-poaching in East Anglia has become such a lucrative business that gangs are prepared to kill gamekeepers or anyone else who gets in their way. Page 7

Coffee is best cure for common cold

Forget hot toddies: the best remedy for a cold is a cup of coffee, according to psychologists at the University of Bristol. The drink "largely eliminated the effects of having a cold", they report after experiments involving 100 volunteers. Earlier trials with vodka had failed to show any beneficial effects on mood or performance. Page 1

Yam remedy

Doctors are to hold tests on an extract from a wild Mexican yam which many women claim alleviates the misery of menopause and is an alternative to hormone replacement therapy. Page 8

Prints of time

A treasure trove of Edwardian photographs shows portraits they see for nearly a century. They include pictures of Lillie Langtry, the actress who became the King's mistress. Page 9

Setback for Mugabe

The European Union and the World Bank has forced President Mugabe to effectively abandon his grab of white-owned farms as the price for loans for poor Zimbabwe. Page 12

Castro repentant

President Castro, who persecuted the Roman Catholic Church for most of his 38 years in power, appealed to Cubans to turn out en masse at papal events. Page 11

Turkey bans party

Turkey's decision to outlaw the pro-Islamic Welfare Party has come under attack by both Iran and America. The decision could inflame the tense political situation. Page 13

Woe in Singapore

The economic storms battering Asia have finally hit Singapore, forcing one of its high-tech flagships to lay off staff. Page 14



Entertainer Chris Evans with paintings from his gallery, Well Hung, which is participating in Art 98, the London Contemporary Art Fair.

Company benefits: Wilson Connolly, the housebuilder, stands to make £210 million from the Government's campaign to persuade Hyundai to build a microchip plant in Scotland. Page 48

Young love in the Fifties: Part two of the literary love affair between Ted Hughes and Sylvia Plath that turned to tragedy. Page 15

Towards 2000: "You can, it seems, take the millennium out of Christianity, but you cannot take Christianity out of the millennium," says Melvyn Bragg. Page 18

Football: Chelsea were beaten 3-1 by a resurgent Everton to end their hopes of moving back into second place in the FA Carling Premiership. Page 25

Trade plea: The World Trade Organisation has called for a united stand by world leaders against protectionism after the crisis in South-East Asia. Page 48

Natural selection: Why do some couples struggle to have a baby? Why are 10 per cent of children not sired by their supposed fathers? In the first extract from their new book, *Baby Wars*, Dr Robin Baker and Elizabeth Oram explain the secrets of conception. Page 16

Barber shop: Opera North's staging of the Sondheim musical *Sweeney Todd* proves that this work is worth the attention of any opera company. Page 18

Cricket: England beat Jamaica by an innings and 65 runs on an unreliable pitch at Montego Bay to make a winning start to their tour of the West Indies. Page 27

Trouble ahead: The merger between Price Waterhouse and Coopers & Lybrand is likely to be delayed because of the strength of opposition to the deal. Page 45

Secure balance: Men select women for their health, fertility and fidelity - though not consciously, of course. Women are primarily concerned with the security a man can offer: looks are a secondary matter. Page 17

Broadway melodies: Benedict Nightingale reports from New York on the musical adaptation of *Ragtime* which opened the city's new Ford Centre for the Performing Arts. Page 19

Euro Cup: England were given a difficult route to the European championship of 2000 when the draw for the qualifying competition put them in the same group as Poland, Bulgaria, Sweden and Luxembourg. Page 31

Milennium bug: An industrial disaster could occur because companies do not realise that the millennium bug will affect computers inside plant machinery. Page 44

Flying Finn: His latest concert suggests that Sakari Oramo is a worthy successor to Sir Simon Rattle with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. Page 18

Rugby Union: Gloucester emerged triumphant by one point after a typically hard-fought derby match with Bristol. Page 35

Baseball: Thames Valley Tigers won the Sainsbury's Classic Cola National Cup for the first time after overcoming Leicester Riders in the final. Page 36

Four share the £15.8 million rollover jackpot. Eleven win £309,437 each for five numbers and bonus ball; 689 get £2,088 each for five numbers; 42,317 get £10 each for four balls; 907,380 win £10 each for three numbers.

George Pöttinger, civil servant, Gulsari Lal Nanda, twice Prime Minister of India; Tony Dunson, golfer; The Hon Penelope Plowry, missionary. Page 23

Cost of safer food; Japanese POWs; urban cyclists; police; Balkan Islands; duvet covers. Page 21

Whatever the outcome, Paul Jones - transformed into a Hillary Clinton look-alike for the occasion - has already won by forcing the most powerful man on earth to answer humiliating questions about his anatomy. - Corriere della Sera

General: it will be very cold with a penetrating north wind, particularly in eastern districts where there will be further snow showers. Most areas will have sunny spells, the best of the sunshine in western Britain, along the Channel coast, and in Northern Ireland. In these western areas the wind should subside later. Frost will develop widely after dark.

London, SE England, E Anglia, E Midlands, W Midlands: a low snow showers and a few sunny spells. A cold northwesterly wind. Max 4C (39F).

Central S England, Channel Isles, SW England, S Wales, N Wales, NW England, Lake District, Isle of Man, Central N England: a small rise of a westerly shower, but mostly dry with sunny intervals. A cold northwesterly wind. Max 6C (43F).

E England, NE England: cold, frequent snow showers, low bright spells. Wind strong, northerly. Max 4C (39F).

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,692

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down.

- ACROSS 1 Jazz work following live broadcast's start (5). 4 One may be fired, like George the pilot (9). 9 Trusted adviser to king, previously an inflicter of pain (9). 10 Sucker's fooled by this person putting his cards on the table (5). 11 Woodworm may do it to a larch or pine (3,4,5,3). 12 Amount of heat from new coal? That's about right (7). 14 Exposed rock impossible to handle (7). 16 He picks stew, being rather hungry (7). 19 Sailor's left in charge round covered entrance (7). 21 See red and leave ground with the title (3,3,3,6). 23 European money partially invested in arms (5).

The solution of Saturday's Prize Puzzle No 20,691 will appear next Saturday. The five winners will each receive a £20 book token.

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UNDER THE SKIN OF SPORT

RUNNING FOR DIANA
The 20 Times readers raising money in the London Marathon
PAGE 40

COMMON TOUCH
Pat Rafter talks of life as the people's champion
PAGE 26

WARMING UP NICELY
Winning start for England's cricketers in Jamaica
PAGE 27

LYNNE TRUSS
Going nuts over crisps and food, glorious food at Filbert Street
PAGE 37

TIMES SPORT 17 PAGES

MONDAY JANUARY 19 1998

EVERTON EXPOSE FURTHER FLAWS IN TITLE CHALLENGE



Ferguson, the aggressive centre forward who was a constant torment to Chelsea yesterday, gives a clenched-fist salute after putting Everton in front at Goodison Park. Photograph: Marc Aspland

Chelsea lack staying power

IT WAS as if Chelsea had fulfilled a prophecy. Trooping off the team coach before this match, they had passed a man, drenched by the persistent rain, raising aloft a banner that proclaimed: "God is the only true hope."

It is hard to say whether he had a religious passion, or merely an uncanny insight into the game of football. Chelsea entered Goodison Park still grasping at the hope of clawing back Manchester United's lead in the FA Cup. After an ultimately crushing defeat by Everton, they surely now need divine intervention.

It was an important victory for the home side, which took them up to thirteenth place and eased the fear of relegation that has hung around Goodison Park all season like a malevolent spirit.

Of more significance, however, is Chelsea's suicidal tendency in matches they desperately need to win. How many times will they drag themselves into contention only to drop points that were theirs for the taking? The answer, sadly, is not too many more, because a ten-point deficit should Manchester United win away to Southampton this evening, looks an impossible gap to bridge.

Ruud Gullit, the Chelsea player-manager, has shaped an attractive side capable of taking apart any opposition when the mood takes them, as it did during the first half yesterday. But equally, they are capable of performing as they did after the interval, which was woefully.

It left Gullit in reflective mood. "It's a lot now to ask us to catch Manchester United, but, if we play like this, we don't deserve to be up there," he said. "We started so well in

the first half, but in the second we again did ourselves harm by the way we played.

"It was sloppy, we gave the ball away too much and that gave Everton confidence. If we are going to pass so poorly we need to be solid, and we weren't. We have come a long way in a short space and maybe we have players who can't handle the pressure of having to win every week that this situation demands."

Chelsea dominated the first half, took the lead and looked in control. Only then did they engineer their own downfall, suggesting that Gullit is correct in saying that his side are not yet ready to handle the pressures of challenging for the title.

It had all looked so promising early on. Sinclair, charging forward, had crafted one chance that Flo was inches away from converting. Then Sinclair, himself, shot weakly when well placed. That early promise was soon rewarded, though.

	3	
EVERTON	3	CHELSEA
Speed 99 Ferguson 62, Duberry 83 (60)		Flo 37
Attendance: 32,356		

By DAVID MADDOCK

The opening goal came after 37 minutes when Lambourde, with a canny pass, put Clarke inside the full back on the left. The Chelsea captain crossed for Flo to turn in the penalty area and, even though he momentarily lost the ball, he was allowed sufficient time to regain his balance and shoot into the unguarded goal.

Within two minutes, though, Everton were level, and that tipped the balance of the match. It was a scrappy goal that had Gullit pulling his dreadlocks out. "They were all sloppy goals, but that just handed them the initiative,"

he said. It was Speed who provided the finishing touch, but Barmby crafted it. The little forward has been born again in a midfield role and he was magnificent all afternoon — probing and pushing with his slide-rule passing.

He accepted a good ball from Grant on the right of the box and crossed to the far post, where Madar met the ball with a powerful header. It was blocked by Sinclair, but Speed squeezed a shot through the narrowest of gaps.

Ferguson's goal, which gave Everton the lead after 62 minutes, was a perfect illustration

of the weakness that has persistently undermined Chelsea's title challenge this season. They are as sleek as a Ferrari going forward, but take a peek at what underpins this team and it is the suspension of a Lada. The defence simply fails to provide an adequate foundation on which to build their, at times, exquisite attacking momentum. It was Ferguson, in particular, who exposed the frailty of the back line with an aggression to match his oversize frame.

He had roughed them up all afternoon, delighting in the torment of Duberry, who looked a little like one of those fresh-faced kids getting his first game in the local Sunday league. A look of terror settled on the defender's face early on and never really disappeared.

The Everton forward's methods rarely appear lawful, but he was allowed to slug away at his markers all afternoon and, by the end, Duberry was out on the ropes, punch-drunk. Not only did he allow

the Scotland striker to score Everton's second goal, but he then conceded a comical own goal.

Everton had hinted at danger a minute before their second goal, when Madar broke free only to see his shot well saved. From the resultant corner, Ferguson headed home, completely unchallenged, from five yards out.

Ferguson, like Zola for Chelsea, had suffered with a stomach bug before the match and was extremely doubtful even an hour before the kick-off. Unlike Zola, however, he refused to succumb.

Howard Kendall, the Everton manager, said: "Duncan came in this morning and said that he wasn't up to it because he was feeling ill, but we left it as late as possible and, an hour before the kick-off, decided to play him. It was his decision, he really wanted to give it a go and I have got to pay a special tribute to him because he was absolutely outstanding."

Chelsea's embarrassment was complete when Ferguson lost control of the ball in the opposition's penalty area, but menaced poor Duberry to such an extent that the defender sliced his frantic clearance into the bottom corner of the net. A fitting end, one suspects, to a challenge that has become increasingly flawed.

EVERTON (2-2): T. Myers — C. Short (sub: C. Thomson, B. S. Ellis, C. Tier — G. Allen, A. Grant, G. Speed, N. Barmby, M. Sid — D. Ferguson, M. Madar (sub: G. Family, 70).

CHELSEA (3-2): E. De Goey — M. Duberry, F. Lambourde, S. Clarke — F. Sinclair (sub: R. Gullit, 75), D. Postleton, S. Houston, S. Lambourde, G. D. Snares — T. A. Flo (sub: G. Veal, 70), M. Hughes.

Released: A. Willis

England draw Poland — again

FROM ROB HUGHES IN GENEVA

THE five nations of Britain and Ireland received mixed blessings at the Euro 2000 football championship draw here in Belgium yesterday. As the rain cascaded outside the Congress Hall, Glenn Hoddle discovered that his fate lay not only in another of those interminable serial visits to Poland, but also in the pedigree of such countries as Bulgaria and Sweden.

Not even the supposed easy team of the group, Luxembourg, offered much succour, for it was there, that, on

England's last competitive visit, the hooligans sacked the indefensible Principality, and their mayor declared that never again would England and their followers be welcomed.

"It's a tough group," Hoddle said, "probably as difficult as any that have come out together. Bulgaria and Sweden are very established teams, we know they will be tough games, and Poland? We know our way there, that's for sure."

This is the fifth successive qualifying tournament in which England and the Poles have been drawn in the same group.

Scotland, who were also seeded, found the sunshine. Their manager, Craig Brown, said: "First impressions are favourable, especially since they indicate that this is a group from which first or second place is possible."

The Scots have drawn the Czech Republic, a team flat-

tered by their appearance in the final of Euro 96 at Wembley, but thereafter they have Lithuania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Faeroe Isles and, if there is light, Estonia. "If they don't get through from that, they should give up football," one observer commented.

Alas, poor Wales: they drew Italy, Denmark, Switzerland and Belarus. Northern Ireland are drawn, yet again, in a group involving Germany, while Ireland will face Yugoslavia, Croatia and FYR Macedonia.

Shearer's return, page 28
Wendell Villa, page 29
Results and tables, page 30
Lynne Truss, page 37
Young talent, page 41

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England's tour of West Indies launched with crushing victory

Headley excels in rout of Jamaica

FROM ALAN LEE CRICKET CORRESPONDENT IN JAMAICA

MONTEGO BAY (third day of four): England beat Jamaica by an innings and 65 runs

IT WAS a graphic gauge of conditions at Jarrett Park yesterday that one of the finest wicketkeepers in the world was reduced to wearing a helmet while standing back...



REBECCA MADEN

Headley, whose grandfather and father were both born in Jamaica, bowling with relish on a rogue pitch which helped him to achieve fine figures

Conventionally, a touring team with only two warm-up fixtures would resist enforcing a follow-on, preferring additional batting practice...

marks made by the ball on the first day, when the surface was damp, became treacherous craters on the second...

SCOREBOARD FROM MONTEGO BAY

Table with columns for ENGLAND: First Innings, JAMAICA: First Innings, ENGLAND: Second Innings, and JAMAICA: Second Innings, listing player names, runs, and wickets.

Hinds perished similarly, fishing against a wide one from Caddick...

Harsh lessons on paradise island

ENGLAND A were yesterday given a crash course in the disciplines required to combat the problems posed on the subcontinent after their surprising defeat in their opening warm-up game in Colombo...

De Silva secures Sri Lanka victory

ARAVINDA DE SILVA steered Sri Lanka to a five-wicket victory over Zimbabwe in the second Test in Colombo yesterday with a magnificent, unbeaten 143...

added 189 runs for the sixth wicket, a Sri Lanka record...

vinda's excellent knock...

SPORT IN BRIEF

British return to top road racing

■ CYCLING: For the first time since the collapse of the ANC road racing squad in 1987, Great Britain will have a leading trade team with a full programme of road and track events abroad this year...

Hasan seen as threat

■ CRICKET: Pakistan are the first opponents for England in the super league stage of the Under-19 World Cup at Centurion Park today...

HOLDERS bow out

■ BOWLS: Hampshire defeated Nottinghamshire, the holders of the Liberty Trophy, 111-100, at Isis, thanks mainly to a 29-13 win for the rink skipped by Julian Haine...

Ainslie out of sight

■ SAILING: Ben Ainslie, right, of Great Britain, secured an impressive win in the Laser class at the Sail Melbourne 98 regatta...



Brown across first

■ ATHLETICS: Jonathan Brown, of Great Britain, won the seventeenth running of the Cross Ocean-France cross-country race in Le Mans yesterday...

Oldham start afresh

■ RUGBY LEAGUE: Oldham beat Heworth, the York amateur side, 36-14 yesterday at Boundary Park to progress to a third-round match at Widnes in the Silk Cut Challenge Cup...

Sweet success

■ RALLYING: Jean-Pierre Fontenay claimed his first Paris-Dakar title yesterday at the sixteenth attempt...

Austrian triumph

■ SKIING: Renate Götschl, right, achieved the first World Cup victory by an Austrian woman in more than a year yesterday...



Olsson back on track

■ BOBSLEIGH: Sean Olsson, of Great Britain, put his Winter Olympics campaign back on track by finishing sixth at the four-man bobsleigh World Cup in Austria yesterday...

German swansong

■ FOOTBALL: Jürgen Klinsmann announced yesterday that he would be retiring after the World Cup in France this summer...



De Silva: sixteenth century

India race to record

HRISHIKESH Kamthkar, the India all-rounder, hit a boundary off the penultimate ball of the match to win the Independence Cup...

Scoreboards, page 39

Advertisement for Eagle Star life insurance, featuring the text 'Are you paying too much for your pension?' and 'Call 0800 77 66 66 for pensions with really low charges'.

Advertisement for 'fund' with the text 'fund the pro' and 'Call 0800 77 66 66'.

FA Carling Premiership: Midlands pair suffering self-inflicted managerial strife

Rovers run riot as woeful Villa fan flames of discontent

ROY HODGSON, who is committing an act of gross decency at Blackburn by turning the Rovers back into a decent team...



BLACKBURN ROVERS 5 ASTON VILLA 0

By Michael Henderson

unacceptable. Neither in defence nor in midfield, and certainly not in attack, did they measure up to the standards expected of senior professionals...

On this occasion it was Sutton's partner, Kevin Gallacher, who helped himself to three goals, and the Villa supporters will not be forgetting the disgrace of their side's performance...

A collection of Little's public utterances would not make much of a book; in fact, it would hardly run to a page...

Blackburn, by contrast, are a happy, confident team again and have found themselves after a difficult two years...

Sherwood, who ran Villa into the ground and sustained his effort for 90 minutes, scored the first goal and made the second for Gallacher...

Hodgson deserves much of the praise for reshaping a team that was starting to look tired and the players should also be commended for taking the pains to reinvent themselves...

To improve their team they could do with a ball-player in the middle of the field, where Filcifort tends to replicate Sherwood's work...

"Don't be too harsh on Brian," Hodgson said charitably. "He's had a bad day, that's all..."

BLACKBURN ROVERS (4-4-2): Flowers - J Jones, Henderson, O'Hare, J West - S Ripley, Sherwood, G Filcifort, G Croft, T Smith, D Duff - C Sutton, K Gallacher (sub: W McKinlay, G).

ASTON VILLA (5-2-1-2): M Beath - F Nelson, U Edozie, S Sarrinton, S Grayson, A Wright - M Drapeau, I Taylor - D Yorke - S Collymore, S McEvoy.

Referee: K Burgin



The fate of Williams, left, is sealed as the referee reaches for his red card at Highfield Road. Photograph: Peter Luckhurst

Strachan risking credibility and FA wrath by lodging hasty complaint

AT THE start of the season, John Barnwell, the chief executive of the League Managers' Association, issued a directive under the title 'Take time to think before you speak'...

and night to get things right, but this club gets nothing from refs. He suggested that his disagreement with David Elzler, England's senior referee, during the away match against Derby County...



COVENTRY CITY 2 ARSENAL 2

By Russell Kempson

Gordon Strachan, the Coventry City manager, either did not receive the letter or has long since forgotten the sage words. He continues to question the competence of referees on an almost routine basis...

Yet it did not impress Strachan. "The ref was an absolute joke," he said. "We work morning, noon

entry were thus restricted to one goal - Whelan's prod-in from Solvid's pass. Novice defending allowed Arsenal to poach a 2-1 lead, with Bergkamp seizing on Williams's misplaced header and Anelka latching on to Hedman's fumble...

before opening Mr Mouth. He should also consider the facts. Coventry would have won convincingly had Huckerty not been so selfish in the first half...

Such hasty, ill-considered remarks hardly enhance Strachan's growing reputation as a manager who, in all probability, will steer Coventry away from their annual scramble to avoid relegation.

player to be went off since Arsene Wenger arrived at Highbury 16 months ago. More contentious was the dismissal of Williams, the Coventry defender, in the 79th minute...

COVENTRY CITY (4-4-2): M Hedman - R Nelson, G Green, P Williams, D Burrows - P Taylor, G Boateng, T E Solvid, N Whelan - D Dabbin, D Huckerty. ARSENAL (3-5-2): D Seaman - M Keown (sub: G Gendron, A Smith), S South, M Upson - L Dixon, R Perrier, P Vieira, E Pox, N Winstanley - N Anelka (sub: I Ben Mouni, B). Referee: S Lodge.



Gallacher celebrates the second of his three goals in an outstanding performance at Ewood Park

Liverpool dish up performance that leaves sour taste in mouth

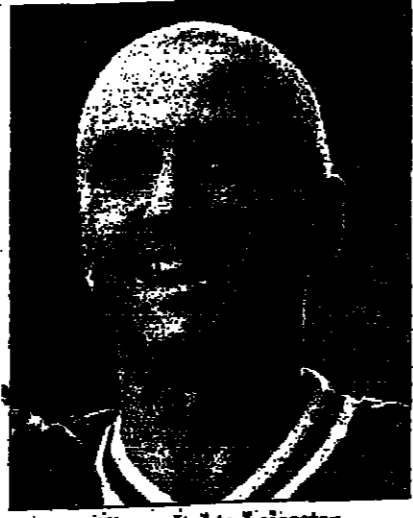
ANYONE can tolerate failure. It is underachievement, the careless squandering of talent, that is so much harder to stomach, but Liverpool continue to feed their supporters a regular diet of the stuff...



LEICESTER CITY 0 LIVERPOOL 0

By Matt Dickinson

That a few die-hards appear to be growing a little sick of the taste should surprise nobody. They are, though - a fact underlined by a moment in the second half when the ball flew out of play and into the visiting section of seats...



Elliott: vital to Leicester

yards out of position and he took full advantage by delivering a bombardment of dangerous crosses from the left flank. Try as he might, though, Marshall, toiling hard alongside the labouring Heskey, could not find his heading range...

No one is struggling more than Jason McAteer. The Liverpool full back can currently be seen floundering around in a television advert for Wash and Go shampoo...

Summit air proving too rarefied for ill-equipped climbing party

IT IS not often you hear Gary Glitter these days, but then, they are not squeamish in Barnsley, and a victory on the back of a 6-0 trouncing needs celebrating...



BARNSLEY 1 CRYSTAL PALACE 0

By David Maddock

Significantly, the one player on the pitch who appeared to have sufficient class was Tomas Brodin, despite being so unfit at present, after a two-year mid-career sabbatical, that he resembled an escapee from a slaughterhouse in Wiltshire...



Brodin: assured technique

two goals ruled out for offside in the second, and created presentable opportunities for Dyer, Bent and Gordon. But as Steve Coppell, the Palace manager, said afterwards, there just wasn't enough quality about his side's finishing...

It was prose after that, though, both sides approaching the ball as if were primed and dangerous. Barnsley, in particular, lacked finesse, but ironically, that may work in their favour. They do not have the resources to play their way out of trouble so they will have to scrap...

FOOTBALL

Hodde left with short straw in Euro 2000 draw

FROM ROB HUGHES IN GHENT

WE SHALL have cause, as the 21st century turns into the 22nd, to remember this elegant Belgian city. How it poured yesterday and, with the city's beauty doused by rain, so too were Glenn Hoddle's bright expectations for the 2000 European championship turned distinctly grey.

For England the administrators of Uefa had done their level best. The governing body of European football had granted four nations — England, Germany, Italy and Spain — special status, guaranteeing them nothing more arduous than a qualifying group of five, whereas others had to take the lottery in groups of six. That is Uefa's way of rewarding those with television pulling power and of sorting out a draw involving 49 hungry nations as the continent's family of football grows ever more demanding.

There were smiles on the faces of the Scots as they drew a group from which they can surely maintain their impressive qualifying record. From Bobby Gould, the manager of Wales, drawn to play against Italy, Denmark, Switzerland and Belarus, it was a time to be ironic and succinct. "Are you happy with that?" he was asked. "The financial men are!" he responded.

Northern Ireland, though they know not who will manage them, have gone to Germany before and proved almost equal in their stubbornness to the might of the European champions, but they also face Turkey, who can play a bit, and Finland and Moldova, who, on their home territory, are testing.

The luck of the gods does not seem to have affection for Ireland. Yugoslavia are among the more gifted of footballing teams. Croatia, with strikers such as Davor Suker and talented individuals all around, are a nation of pedigree when motivated. And

the Irish remember well that they were beaten by Macedonia, 3-2 in Skopje, a result that contributed to their narrow failure to reach the World Cup finals.

And so, to England. They missed the sunshine group, headed by Spain, they avoided the mighty challenges to come in Russia's group, containing France and Ukraine. But the draw was clearly unpleasant. "The difficulty is in the quality of the group," Hoddle said. "I don't think there are problems with the geography. It is difficult because of the talent we're going to be pitched against. Bulgaria would make any group tough, they are respected right throughout Europe. Sweden are in a transitional time, but I think they are beginning to come back up again."

Hoddle caught his breath, possibly realising that his job is not to build up opponents, and found defiance in his words. "We came through a very difficult group in the World Cup, so we have nothing to fear," he said. "It could have been an easier route, but if the luck of the draw was against us on this occasion, so be it." Poland and Luxembourg complete a daunting group. The schedule of matches must be completed within 60 days.

Hoddle was cheered by the return on Saturday of Alan Shearer for Newcastle United. "It's a massive boost," he said. "Hopefully I'll have a fit Alan Shearer for the World Cup. We just had to hang fire because just putting on a shirt doesn't mean he's fit. We need to give him four weeks to decide that."

One month is more than the time Uefa has given two of the Belgian cities, Antwerp and Charleroi, to start work on stadium renovation: otherwise, they will be struck off the Euro 2000 list, removed from a tournament that will be co-

hosted by Holland and Belgium. It highlighted some frictions between Holland, so very progressive and professional in their organisation, and their neighbours, conservative to the point of being backward. The authorities cannot afford to forget Heysel. Administrators themselves are becoming heated. There is politics behind the curtain and some of the Uefa executive called upon Sepp Blatter, general secretary of Fifa, either to come into the open about his reported intention to stand against Lennart Johansson for the presidency of the world governing body this summer, or to resign his post as the senior paid administrator. "I am in the ring, waiting to see who shows up," Johansson said. "I welcome competition, and if there are other candidates, I don't know them."

THE DRAW FOR EURO 2000

Belgium and Holland qualify automatically as joint-hosts for the 16-nation European championship finals in 2000. The other 49 countries are divided into nine groups, the winners of each and the best runner-up qualifying automatically for the finals. The other eight runners-up play off home and away against each other for the remaining four places.

GROUP ONE Norway, Slovenia, Latvia, Georgia, Greece, Albania	GROUP ONE Italy, Belarus, Wales, Switzerland, Denmark	GROUP THREE Germany, Moldova, Northern Ireland, Finland, Turkey
GROUP TWO Russia, Armenia, Iceland, Ukraine, France, Andorra	GROUP FOUR England, Luxembourg, Poland, Sweden, Bulgaria	GROUP FIVE Romania, Liechtenstein, Hungary, Slovakia, Portugal, Azerbaijan
GROUP SIX Spain, San Marino, Cyprus, Israel, Austria	GROUP SEVEN Yugoslavia, Malta, FYR Macedonia, Ireland, Croatia	GROUP NINE Scotland, Faeroe Isles, Bosnia, Lithuania, Czech Republic, Estonia

Halifax cash in on distraction

Stevenage Borough 1
Halifax Town 2

By WALTER GAMMIE

IT WAS impossible to escape a pending fixture against Newcastle United at Broadhall Way on Saturday. There were announcements about the tickets that went on sale yesterday, the rising metal framework of the temporary stand, the cavortings of Blush, a Stevenage all-girl band singing *Loud and Proud* (an anthem composed by Andrew Green, the stadium announcer), John Kettleby casting a weather-eye over proceedings, and a host of marauding television crews.

Paul Fairclough, the manager, permitted himself a glance at the Teletext report of Shearer's return for Newcastle. His reaction was difficult to gauge. He was already shattered. Amid all the film-flammy, he was still trying to come to terms with defeat by Halifax Town in a Vauxhall Conference match of deadly earnestness.

Having stirred his side into giving a vibrant, committed performance, Fairclough had seen the league leaders snatch

victory with a last-minute header by Tony Philliskirk. Philliskirk, in his last match on loan from Cardiff City, had scored an equaliser in the 58th minute when turning in a shot that Hulme had prodded against a post.

Before the interval it had been all Stevenage. George Mulhall, the Halifax manager, said: "They played very well in the first half. They put us under real pressure. They kept turning us and caused us a lot of trouble. We could easily have been 3 or 4-0 down."

All Stevenage had to show for their superiority was a goal headed by Trot from a free kick by Love. "It's been our problem all season," Fairclough said. "Getting that second goal to put a bit of distance between us and sides." He has to squeeze another show of spirit from his team against Hereford United tonight. ... then he can let the FA Cup take over.

STEVENAGE BOROUGH (4-3-3): D Gallagher — J Dillnot, M Smith, R Trot, M Love — J Salomons, D Fenton, S Pardon — N Tabbale (sub: G Dixon, G Smith), D Wardlawson (sub: N Homan, 76), G Greenaway.
HALIFAX TOWN (5-2-2): L Moran — A Thackeray, J Mackay, K O'Regan, P Storer, M Bradshaw — K Hulme, J Brown, J Peterson — A Philliskirk, G Horsfield.
Referee: J Ross

Lowly outposts beckon Scots

KEVIN McCARRA



Scottish commentary

If acquaintance guaranteed affection, Scotland supporters would grow infatuated with the town of Torshavn. The draw yesterday for the qualifying competition of the European championship in 2000 once again pairs the national team with the Faeroe Isles. Craig Brown's side have already met them on their path to the finals of the 1996 European championship.

Some supporters have also flirted in other trips to Torshavn over the past three years, since Raith Rovers and Rangers have both played Gotu in European club competitions. For the average Scot, familiarity with the strict Faeroese regulation of alcohol has produced no fondness. If they must be sent on a circuit of old haunts, supporters will be happier with yet another sortie to Tallinn.

In group nine, Scotland are to rub shoulders with Estonia, having played them already in the qualifiers for both the 1994 and 1998 World Cups. The most recent engagements include the picturesque fiasco at the Kadrioru Stadium in October 1996, when Scotland kicked off with no opponents on the field, after Estonia refused to turn up because of a dispute over floodlighting and the kick-off time.

Any attempt to suggest a lingering feud is hopeless. If the Estonians did nurse any desire for vengeance, it was assuaged when they held Brown's team to a 0-0 draw when the rescheduled game eventually took place in Monaco last year. Scotland will not be expecting grudge matches.

When the manager looked to the future, at the draw in Ghent yesterday, he must have been filled with a sense of déjà vu. But Bill Wilson, the Scottish Football Association's commercial director, will not have indulged in musings over the quirks of the draw. With the Czech Republic, Lithuania and Bosnia-Herzegovina joining Estonia and the Faeroe Isles to make up the opposition, he at least is sure of defeat. There is no chance of winning large bids for the television rights to Scotland's matches.

A humdrum programme is Brown's reward for the recent consistency of performance. Scotland were among the top seeds at yesterday's draw and

were therefore deprived of the thrill, as well as the fear, of facing any of the mightiest nations.

Brown, pragmatist that he is, will be jubilant to find his side in what seems to be the weakest of the groups, because his hopes are thereby strengthened of creating history by leading Scotland to the finals of a third significant tournament in succession.

While prestige is lacking, however, danger can never be wholly absent. On reflection, some may wonder, for instance, why the Czech Republic are being taken so lightly by pundits. They did reach the Euro 96 final, where they held the lead against Germany, and the failure in the qualifiers for the 1998 World Cup may simply have been a necessary pause while a good side caught its breath.

It is impossible to be disdainful of the Czech squad. The contingent in England includes Patrik Berger, of Liverpool, and Pavel Svec, of Newcastle United, while Karel Poborsky recently left Manchester United for Benfica. One might also consider the merits of the players in Germany, such as Pavel Kuka, at Kaiserslautern, or Jiri Nemec, of Schalke 04.

Bosnia could give a manager pause for thought as well. A team that can defeat Denmark 3-0, as they did in August of last year in a World Cup qualifier in Sarajevo, need not apologise for its presence. Lithuania are scarcely to be regarded as lowly either, given that they are to be found just one place below the capable Ukraine side in the Uefa rankings.

Scotland are entitled to be optimistic, but it would only take one false move for them to find themselves caught up in a punishing struggle in a dowdy group.

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FA CARLING PREMIERSHIP

Table with 3 columns: Home Team, Score, Away Team. Includes matches like Crystal Palace vs Arsenal, Blackburn vs Aston Villa.

OVERSEAS

Tables for Italian League, Spanish League, and Portuguese League with columns for P, W, D, L, F, A, Pts.

GOALSCORERS

Table listing goal scorers for various teams and leagues, including names and goals scored.

NATIONWIDE FOOTBALL LEAGUE

Table showing Nationwide Football League standings with columns for Home and Away records.

FIRST DIVISION

Table of First Division football results and fixtures.

SECOND DIVISION

Table of Second Division football results and fixtures.

THIRD DIVISION

Table of Third Division football results and fixtures.

GOALSCORERS

Table listing goal scorers for various leagues.

PREMIER DIVISION

Table of Premier Division football results and fixtures.

FIRST DIVISION

Table of First Division football results and fixtures.

SECOND DIVISION

Table of Second Division football results and fixtures.

THIRD DIVISION

Table of Third Division football results and fixtures.

NON-LEAGUE AND NATIONAL LEAGUES

Large table listing various non-league and national league results and fixtures.

FIRST DIVISION

Table of First Division football results and fixtures.

SECOND DIVISION

Table of Second Division football results and fixtures.

THIRD DIVISION

Table of Third Division football results and fixtures.

GOALSCORERS

Table listing goal scorers for various leagues.



Yachtsman unveils revolutionary design for sail of the century A giant cat to conquer the world

Edward Gorman looks at a multihull that astounded a London Boat Show audience

I can't wait to sail it — we're doing it — it is happening. The small group of technical experts sat in stunned silence for a few moments, as they attempted to digest the enormity of Pete Goss's latest sailing venture. "Any questions?" Goss asked, with a half-suppressed giggle.

This was a private briefing for "technical suppliers" at the London Boat Show last week, and for most of them, it was their first chance to see the plans for what truly can be termed "the most exciting racing yacht built in this country": a 115ft catamaran, with a beam of 60ft, capable of averaging a comfortable 40 knots and knocking at least ten days off the fastest time for sailing round the world non-stop. On a number of levels Goss's new boat — the so-called *Goss Challenger* — and the extent of his ambition are amazing. First, Goss and Adrian Thompson, the designer, have come up with the biggest multihull built in Britain. Secondly, Goss and his hard-working core team, led by Mark Orr, have found the money to build it — and thirdly, this huge boat will be sailed by a crew of only five.

True to his military upbringing and his legendary determination to succeed, this is the result of a carefully laid plan, hatched before the start of the Vendée Globe last year. Goss had heard of the Frenchman Bruno Peyron's plans for The Race — an unlimited non-stop dash round the world to celebrate the millennium, starting on December 31, 2000 — and was hooked by the romance and magnitude of it.

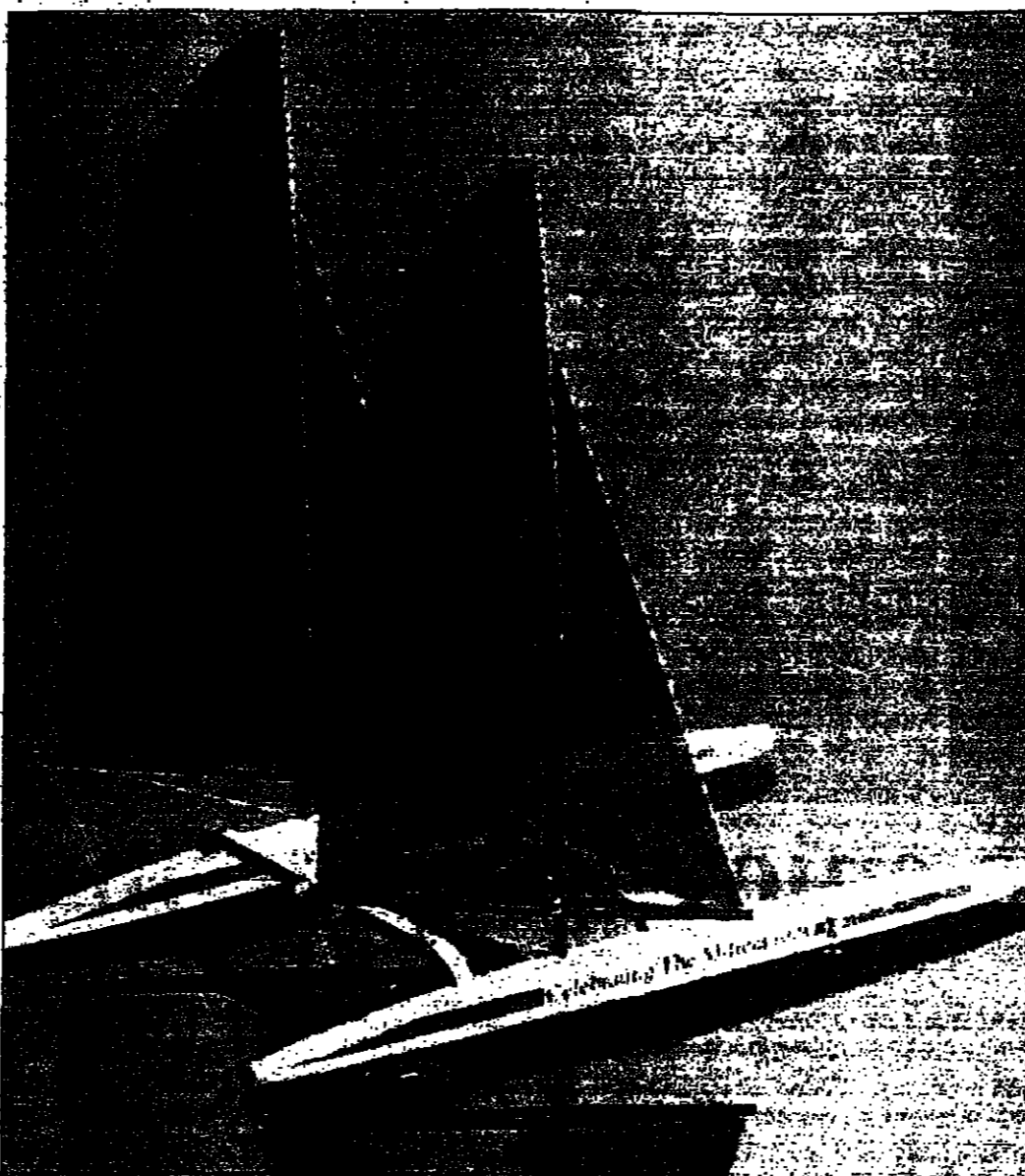
Even as he was surfing round the globe on his Thompson-de-

signed Open 50, *BMW Performance*, Goss was in constant contact with Thompson and Orr, working on the design for the big cat. Partly as a result of his rescue of the Frenchman Raphaël Dinelli, Goss emerged from the Vendée not only drowning in awards but also with an enormously enhanced reputation which has helped to transform his plans from dream to reality.

As always, the key is sponsorship. With relative ease, Goss's team have found four solid backers: BMW, BT, 3M and Sun Microsystems. Boat-building, with a budget of £2 million, will start in the West Country in March, with the catamaran ready for launching one year later. The plan is to warm up with an attempt on the Jules Verne non-stop round-the-world record before the *Goss Challenger* lines up for The Race with up to nine other yachts of unlimited scale and speed. Goss's strategy is based around minimising what he calls "downtime". He believes in an unlimited class is that designers will be tempted to go for excessively large craft capable of great speed but difficult to handle, even by a large crew, and vulnerable to constant gear failure.

"You have to finish to win," said Goss. "At 40 knots, 12 hours of downtime as a result of component failure means you miss one weather system. After that, your race is effectively over."

The answer has been to aim for what Goss and Thompson believe to be the most realistic balance between safety, speed, durability and weight-saving. The boat will have two hulls and two beams, with a central accommodation pod. Instead of a relatively unman-



When completed, the £2 million, 115ft *Goss Challenger* will be capable of averaging a comfortable 40 knots and possibly crewed by just five people for The Race in 2000

ageable rig set on a huge single central mast, the *Goss Challenger* will have two smaller, identical masts supporting Carbonspar-supplied AeroRigs.

The beauty of this option is that the rig is simple. The masts are not housed in the cross-beams which would pose a major structural problem at this size, and there is the option to sail on one mast if necessary. The sails will be controlled by just four main winches,

there will be no spinnakers to carry, and depowering the rig in heavy weather will be much easier than in a conventional set-up.

Thompson does not know the details of other boats being built for The Race, but he feels his design should be competitive. "We could possibly have gone for an even bigger boat," he said. "What we have tried to do is size it so we will be comfortable with the rigs we use. If we have really good

guys, the rigs are controllable because they will not be dealing with massive sails." One potential weakness, he acknowledges, is performance in light airs. Single-masted boats could have rigs up to 90ft higher than the *Goss Challenger*, enabling them to make the best of light conditions. Goss, meanwhile, remains convinced he needs only a crew of five — a theory yet to be proved in practice.



'Goss became hooked by the romance of a race to mark the millennium'

SKIING

Austria's downhill racers battle for Olympic selection

By GRAHAM DUFFELL

THE dark clouds hanging over the Austria men's downhill team are beginning to lift after victories in the two races at Wengen, Switzerland, this weekend. Austria's mood has been downcast not by failure but by the team's astonishing run of success in dominating the downhill this season.

The problem is that in a team where any one of six men could win, only four can be chosen for the Olympic squad for Nagano, Japan, next month.

"The atmosphere is not so good because everybody wants to go to the Olympics," Patrick Ortlieb, the 1992 gold medal-winner, said. "At Bormio [where Austrians filled the first four places] there was no celebration — not one glass of champagne was drunk. Everybody had their lunch and was away."

With three downhills to go, three places seem assured — for Hermann Maier, the discovery of the season, Andreas Schiffrer and Stefan Eberharter. That

leaves the remaining place to be fought over by Werner Franz, Hans Knaus, Hannes Trinkl, Christian Mayer and even Ortlieb. It adds intrigue to the two downhills on the feared Hahnenkamm course at Kitzbühel, Austria, next weekend and the finale at Garmisch, Germany.

Maier, a 25-year-old former bricklayer, skis with a reckless abandon reminiscent of the great Franz Klammer. In only his second World Cup season he has won five races, often by margins up to 1.5 seconds, an enormous distance in downhill skiing. In 17 races he has made 14 appearances on the podium and he was also disqualified after winning the giant slalom at Val d'Isère because he took a ski off too early.

Maier took the first shortened downhill at Wengen on Friday but

Schiffrer, victor at Vail and the second downhill at Bormio, ended his run of victories by taking first place in the full-length official Lauberhorn downhill the following day. It was the fifth Austrian triumph in the six downhills this season and they took five of the top six places. Eberharter finishing fifth and adding to a number of top three finishes this season.

"The team is so strong but we know only four can go to the Olympics so everyone is skiing to the limit," Ortlieb said. "Some are skiing beyond the limit and paying the price, like Pepi." The Tyrolean, Pepi Strobl, crashed at Bormio, fracturing the bone above his right eye and tearing a knee ligament, and was unfit for Wengen.

Ortlieb does not appear destined for Nagano. He is pinning his hopes on experience and strength producing victories on the difficult courses at Kitzbühel and Garmisch. At 30, the age at which Luc Alphand, of France, who dominated so many downhills in the past two seasons, won his first World Cup, Ortlieb is far from over the hill but explains that age teaches you that when you cannot win you should not risk your life.

The short downhill in Nagano, expected to be around 10sec, can produce surprises. Despite the ski federation's threats to refuse to run the Nagano downhill, unless it ran from the top of the mountain, a compromise of lowering the base by a few hundred metres has been reached.

"I think it is the best downhill in Japan with 700 metres vertical drop and some big jumps — it's just a shame we cannot start from the top," Ortlieb said.

"There are lifts up there and slopes but the top is declared to be in a national park and they won't allow it."



Maier: reckless abandon

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SWIMMING: UNITED STATES' PERFECT RELAY RECORD COMES TO END AT WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

Fina happy to leave drug probe to China

FROM CRAIG LORD

CHINA will be left to carry out its own inquiry into allegations of systematic doping of the country's leading swimmers.

When synthetic human growth hormone was found in the luggage of Yuan Yuan at Sydney airport, her coach, Zhou Zhewen, accepted blame.

Faced with a list of 18 questions about China and drugs, Larfaoui, the Fina president, said yesterday: "Further disclosures of the content of the Chinese team are inappropriate in order not to prejudice the further investigations which will be undertaken by the Chinese Swimming Federation and the Chinese Olympic Committee, which will be closely monitored by Fina."

Gunnar Werner, honorary secretary of Fina, seems to have already made up his mind. "We are sure this is not systematic," he said, although he qualified the statement by saying that what Fina had concluded after the inquiry into seven positive anabolic steroid tests from Chinese swimmers in 1994.

As he presented the medals in the medley relay last night, members of the Fina bureau were warmly locking hands with Chinese team officials as if in shared sympathy. But Fina has been left in no doubt here that the wider world is watching and waiting for positive action.



Gold blend: O'Neill, of Australia, celebrates victory in the 200 metres butterfly, while her compatriot, Klim, was named swimmer of the championships



Australia enjoys golden finale

AUSTRALIA Day arrived a week early on the last night of the world championships, the host nation sweeping three of the five titles to close one of the most remarkable chapters in swimming history.

Until yesterday, the United States men had not lost a medley relay since the 4x100 metres was introduced at the Rome Olympic Games in 1960. But at the end of a session that mirrored the closing day at the Atlanta Olympics — with Susie O'Neill and Petria Thomas finishing first and second in the women's 200 metres butterfly and another Australian, not Kieren Perkins this time, but Grant Hackett, 17, winning the 1,500 metres — the atmosphere was ripe for the upset to come.

At the halfway mark of the relay, it looked liked business as usual, the United States were ahead by 0.4sec with two strong swimmers to come. Michael Klim, though, driven by a full house baying and swaying in a sea of yellow and

green, had a record seventh medal on his mind and produced a 51.80sec butterfly leg — 1.61sec faster than Neil Walker, of the United States.

Chris Fydlar, of Australia, left his blocks almost a second up on Gary Hall, who on paper was 1.46sec faster than Fydlar. He would surely overcome the Australian.

A bronze for Hungary and a fifth place for Great Britain, in 3min 41.60sec, which equalled the national record, were hardly noticed. Nor was James Hickman's butterfly leg of 52.44sec, which was the second fastest behind Klim.

FROM CRAIG LORD IN PERTH

medals began with O'Neill's victory in the 200 metres butterfly, in 2min 07.93sec, with Thomas and Misty Hyman, of the United States, keeping at bay two of the last three Chinese hopes of the championships, Wu Yanyan and Qu Yun, who finished fourth and fifth.

It looked as if Australia might take the top two places

Perth results 39

in the 1,500 metres, as Hackett and Daniel Kowalski set a fast early pace. But Kowalski faded to third behind Emiliano Brembilla, the European champion, from Italy.

Australia finished second in the medal table, with seven gold medals to 14 for the United States. A Chinese team weakened by six suspensions was third, with three golds. Klim, named swimmer of the championships, would have

finished ahead of them on his own, three of his personal tally being gold medals. Britain finished a woeful seventeenth, three places worse than in Atlanta.

Don Talbot, head of Australian swimming, explained the spirit behind Australia's success. "There's just euphoria about representing your own country at home at the turn of the century," he said. Asked if Australia was now the greatest swimming nation, he replied: "Hell no, they're [the US] got 14 golds to our seven, that's pitifully far back. We aspire to their 14."

One of those went to Amy Van Dyken, the Olympic champion, in the 50 metres freestyle, with Sandra Voelker, of Germany, second and Shan Yang, of China, third. Van Dyken's time of 25.15sec was well down on Shan's world-record 24.71sec, but then Shan, who swam 25.36sec yesterday, might have been a little upset at the loss of

her coach, Zhou Zhewen, the man sent back to China and suspended for 15 years after admitting putting human growth hormone in the bags of Yuan Yuan.

The men's 200 metres backstroke title also went to the United States, won by Larry Krayzelburg, but it was a depressing weekend for Britain, with Mark Foster and Graeme Smith, both pre-championship medal hopes, failing to make finals on Saturday.

That day will live long in the memory. Partly for the first world title for France, to Roxana Maracutanu, a former Romanian refugee, in the 200 metres backstroke, but mostly for the first defeat of Popov in important international competition. A slow start and lack of concentration led the great Russian nursing his worst time in a 50 metres freestyle, 22.43sec, and cursing himself for having let Bill Plickcz, of the United States, steal away his world title and a perfect record.

Pontypridd get to grips with powerful Bulls

Pontypridd 18 Northern Bulls 0

By GERRARD DAVIES

THE Welsh Rugby Union Challenge Cup is of uncertain pedigree. It was born in the hope that provincial teams from the Super 12 series in the southern hemisphere might be persuaded to send their teams to Wales as part of their pre-season preparation.

This was a fine idea. It would enrich the Welsh fixtures and provide a glimpse of the rugby standards attained in the Super 12 series.

Regrettably, the final arrangements did not quite work out like that. Of the Super 12 teams only the Northern Bulls, including players from Northern Transvaal, Mpumalanga and Gauteng, in South Africa fulfilled the request. The teams that now complete the line-up come from Argentina, Canada, Namibia and Spain.

Yet it fails to satisfy completely. After another round of matches this week, the visitors return home, leaving Cardiff, Pontypridd, Neath and Llanelli in the competition in the spring.

Joost van der Westhuizen, the South Africa scrum half, is in attendance with the Northern Bulls but only as a coaching adviser. Like him, no one quite knows what to make of the tournament. He is nonetheless glad of the opportunity that it gives for his younger talents to stake a claim for the Super 12 team.

Northern Bulls drew 34-34 with Swansea last Wednesday but, on Saturday, they fell away badly against Pontypridd. Even though their five Springboks were not available, this was a credible performance by Pontypridd. Plenty of opportunities were created by both sides, but no tries materialised.

The first half was played at a swift pace, with Northern Bulls putting together some intricate passing movements. They were let down when a final pass invariably went astray or was knocked on.

Pontypridd matched them for pace but were in severe difficulties against a powerful scrum. Curiously, they managed to steal two balls against the head. They were evenly matched in the three-quarters.

This is a colourful mix but hardly of the quality originally envisaged. But, if there had been a good deal of scepticism before the tournament began a week ago, the matches have, in fact, turned out to be exciting and of a higher standard than expected.

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Northern Bulls drew 34-34 with Swansea last Wednesday but, on Saturday, they fell away badly against Pontypridd. Even though their five Springboks were not available, this was a credible performance by Pontypridd. Plenty of opportunities were created by both sides, but no tries materialised.

The first half was played at a swift pace, with Northern Bulls putting together some intricate passing movements. They were let down when a final pass invariably went astray or was knocked on.

Pontypridd matched them for pace but were in severe difficulties against a powerful scrum. Curiously, they managed to steal two balls against the head. They were evenly matched in the three-quarters.

This is a colourful mix but hardly of the quality originally envisaged. But, if there had been a good deal of scepticism before the tournament began a week ago, the matches have, in fact, turned out to be exciting and of a higher standard than expected.

Yet it fails to satisfy completely. After another round of matches this week, the visitors return home, leaving Cardiff, Pontypridd, Neath and Llanelli in the competition in the spring.

Boxing: Gatti beaten while Catley delights his Bristol supporters

Manfredy disrupts Hamed's schedule

By SRIKUMAR SEN, BOXING CORRESPONDENT

he was prepared to consider Manfredy as an opponent at 130lb. Manfredy said he wanted to meet Hamed but Larry Merchant, the HBO interviewer, said it was unlikely that the Hamed-Manfredy match would be made.

Frank Warren, Hamed's promoter, told HBO, the television company behind the World Boxing Organisation featherweight champion, that

he would lose a star in whom it had invested millions.

The bout was a bloody one for the first round. Gatti's left eyebrow was cut by a right hand. The Canadian was dropped in the third but got up as usual to fight back. But by the sixth round, the cut had lengthened to six centimetres.

Despite breaking his right hand in the fifth, Manfredy still proved too strong and in the eighth round, the referee, Wayne Hedgeboth, stepped in.

Glenn Catley, of Bristol, is able to box for one of four titles. After relieving Neville Brown, of Derby, of the British middleweight championship at Bristol on Saturday, Catley can now challenge for the European or the world title, defend his British crown, or even move up to super-middleweight to try for a world title in that division.

The bout with Brown was an exciting one with the champion coming back strongly in the second half, but he had taken such a pounding in the early stages that he had to pull out after the eighth.

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MJN PC-2 Range advertisement featuring various computer models (MJN 233-2, MJN 233M-2, MJN 266-2, MJN 300-2) with specifications and prices. Includes a 'New Range' banner and a 'Best Buy' badge.

Boxing and sports news section including 'Manfredy disrupts Hamed's schedule', 'Boxing: Gatti beaten while Catley delights his Bristol supporters', and a 'GUIDE TO THE WEEK AHEAD' listing various sports events.

Vertical text on the right edge of the page, including 'Gloucester glory in hard slog' and 'deepen a... lose again'.

RUGBY UNION

Gloucester glory in hard slog

Table with 2 columns: Team, Points. Bristol 13, Gloucester 14.

By JOHN HOPKINS

RIVALRIES do not come much fiercer than between these two West Country teams... Gloucester gained what proved a decisive one-point advantage with almost a quarter of the game to go.

Full results and league tables Page 39

extraordinary enthusiasm generated by the Gloucester supporters and wishing they could bottle it for use at Lansdowne Road and Twickenham.

Bristol took ten minutes to get into Gloucester's half and by then Gloucester had scored the game's only try. Cornwall won a lineout ten yards out and the forwards drove over the line so that Fidler could score.

By half, who was attempting to chase his own kick through. Bristol's defence in a penalty-strewn half - there were 22 in all - was outstanding. "They played with a lot of passion and heart," Richard Hill, the Gloucester coach, admitted.

Mapletoft kicked an easy penalty soon after half-time to move Gloucester four points ahead only for Burke to kick two penalties in three minutes to give Bristol a one-point lead.

NOTHING is going right for Harlequins. The Londoners lost their fourth successive match yesterday and are starting to look anxiously over their shoulders in the Allied Dunbar Premiership first division. Defeat against in-form Northampton, which lifted the Saints into the top four, left Harlequins stagnating in the lower half of the table.



Maggs, the Bristol wing, is glad of support as Johnson, left, of Gloucester, tries to wrestle the ball free

Northampton inflict more pain

Table with 2 columns: Team, Points. Harlequins 5, Northampton 30.

By ALAN PEARY

And it was Grayson's raking kick, timed and executed to perfection, that created a try for Jon Sleightholme. Seeking a fifth win in six league games, Northampton were buzzing with confidence and they gained reward as Ian Hunter's pass allowed Gregor Townsend to scamper over in the right-hand corner.

Wood said: "We didn't play for 40 minutes. Northampton played a very basic game and they played it superbly well. In the second half we were trying to play catch-up rugby. They played exactly as we wanted to play."

Wood said: "We didn't play for 40 minutes. Northampton played a very basic game and they played it superbly well. In the second half we were trying to play catch-up rugby. They played exactly as we wanted to play."

Leicester fail to make the most of their chances

Table with 2 columns: Team, Points. Leicester 45, Wasps 21.

By DAVID HANDS RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

LEICESTER may yet have a role to play in the destiny of the Allied Dunbar Premiership title - Nigel Meville, the Wasps director of rugby, certainly believes they will - but they have carried through into the new year the maddening habit that afflicted them in the old. So frequently they do not score the points their approach work suggests they should and, against the best of the rest, they have paid for it.

beating of any team in the league, if we can stay fit," Stransky said, mindful no doubt, that he expressed a similar sentiment but embracing all of Europe on the eve of Leicester's defeat by Newcastle on December 31.

Such opportunities have come and gone at regular intervals this season, including the Newcastle fixture, and suggest an absence of faith in a back division apparently packed with talent.

He will rest his bruised shoulder next weekend, when Wasps play Exeter in the cup, intending to resume a week before England's entry into the five nations' championship.

But by the time Cockerill left the field on a stretcher, Leicester had broken an unlikely impasse through Austin Healey. For almost the entire middle period of the game they had dominated Wasps utterly but had only a couple of penalty goals by Joel Stransky to show for it; not until Healey injected a lethal dose of pace to score the game's second try did Leicester finally unshackle the cutting edge that carried them to a record number of points against their London opponents.

ontypridd... to grips with... powerful Bull



amed's schedu

Bath postpone inquiry until next month

BATH last night took legal advice and put back the internal inquiry into the alleged ear-biting incident which has resulted in Kevin Yates, the prop forward, being suspended on full pay. Yates's lawyers successfully sought an injunction in the High Court on Saturday night, when more time was requested for the player to prepare his defence.

fish are considering whether to report Philip Bliss, the Bath honorary surgeon to the General Medical Council for the remarks he made last week about the cause of Simon Fenn's injury.

Wakefield, with serious ambitions but without serious money, are caught between a rock and a hard place, in which case the occasional win should be celebrated as steady but meaningful progress.

Wakefield, with serious ambitions but without serious money, are caught between a rock and a hard place, in which case the occasional win should be celebrated as steady but meaningful progress.

Despair deepens as Irish lose again

Table with 2 columns: Team, Points. London Irish 14, Richmond 45.

By MARK SOUSTER

THESE are dark days at Sunbury and even a healthy drop of the dark stuff will have done little to dispel the gloom as London Irish slumped to their ninth defeat in ten games. Willie Anderson insists that somehow his side will still be in the first division next season. He must know something that others do not, for nothing less than a reorganisation of the Allied Dunbar Premiership, about which rumours abound, could save the club which stands with both feet planted firmly on the relegation trapdoor.

PROFESSIONALISM has roughly defined three categories of club: the ambitious rich ones, those that are relatively poor but happy where they are and the aspirants such as Wakefield, who are set to lose £500,000 this season.

Wakefield begin to restore confidence

Table with 2 columns: Team, Points. Wakefield 23, Waterloo 20.

By CHRISTOPHER IRVINE

PROFESSIONALISM has roughly defined three categories of club: the ambitious rich ones, those that are relatively poor but happy where they are and the aspirants such as Wakefield, who are set to lose £500,000 this season.

couple of wins to restore public confidence and many supporters have expected with their feet at the £7 admission price. Clubs such as Wakefield, with serious ambitions but without serious money, are caught between a rock and a hard place, in which case the occasional win should be celebrated as steady but meaningful progress.

SATURDAY. ANYTHING BUT A DAY OF REST.

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Elegantly

BASKETBALL

Tigers ride high after lucky break

By NICHOLAS HARLING

ONE man's agony was another team's euphoria yesterday. As Gene Waldron lay in a hospital bed recovering from an operation to set his fractured right tibia, he was probably spared the occasional sympathetic thought, no more, by Thames Valley Tigers as they basked in the delight of capturing the Sainsbury's Classic Cola National Cup for the first time. Waldron's season had been cut cruelly short by the injury that led to him being removed from a stretcher from the final on Saturday, just when Leicester Riders were threatening to take control. As Waldron disappeared out of the Sheffield Arena, so did the Riders' hopes. The Tigers' 82-78 victory arms them with an extra persuasive argument for having a spacious new 4,000-capacity arena in Bracknell. The trouble is that the local council moves far more sluggishly than a Tiger ever did. If the arena - which is still in the planning stage - is ready by the millennium and the Tigers are still a force, John Nike, 62, their owner, will look an even more contented figure than he did after the victories by his club's men's and women's teams. "The council wants to push it through at their pace," he said, "whereas I want to rush it through at my speed." During his 14 years with the club, Nike has spent, at a conservative estimate, £1.2 million. There has been little prof-



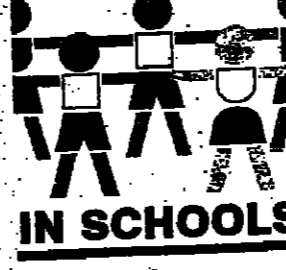
Thames Valley Tigers on the offence during a dramatic final at Sheffield Arena

it. "My aim is to live long enough to break even, but I don't think that is going to happen," he said. All of which must make Waldron wince. The only survivor of his club's previous appearance in the final - in 1991, when they were also runners-up, to Sunderland - he was, at 36, easily the oldest player on court, but with 21 points to his name he was also the most elusive. The last eight points for the Riders, including two three-pointers, had come from the hands of the New Yorker. Then he accidentally got tangled up with Damian Page. Page hobbled out of the collision, but Waldron was not so lucky. "His injury did not help our Leicester coach, said, 'But who knows, who cares if we would have won if he had stayed on court. All I know is that the Tigers did a nice job and Casey Arena proved himself a hell of a point guard. The Tigers have got to give him a lot of credit.' Along with John McCord and the impressive Jason Siemon, Arena was one of three Tigers on four fouls, but it was Arena who, after Waldron's exit, made the biggest impact from the back court. No one benefited more than McCord. He needed to, Tony Holley was being shackled effectively by Billy Singleton, but McCord, the game's top-scorer with 27 points, would probably be the first to admit that he owed his most-valuable-player award to the fact that Waldron was not around. Victory was all the sweeter for Paul James, the Tigers coach. He had been bridled by a suggestion from Donegal that only by sneaking in behind Mick Bett's back had he succeeded Bett as coach in the summer. "Of course that made me mad," James said. "But I had to stay focused. If anything, the players were more angry than I was." Like Arena, Siemon and McCord, Andrea Manghum spent much of the women's final on four fouls and also survived. The outcome was that Manghum finished with a match-winning contribution of 22 points for Thames Valley Ladies Tigers, whose 68-46 victory ended Sheffield Harriers' run of eight cup triumphs and a staggering sequence of 76 wins in all competitions.

Driver following some illustrious footsteps

The red Nissan in the car park at Redruth School is like an open page of a textbook, one in which pupils have shown a great deal of interest and which is a particular favourite of the head teacher because of the message it carries. In silver lettering along both sides of the vehicle, the story of cricket at the school begins to unfold. Peter Grant is the county cricket development officer for Cornwall, a fact well advertised by the car he drives. Of the car's presence at the school and the lettering emblazoned on it, John Shears, the head teacher, said: "It is an evocative message that cricket matters, that cricket is important."

SPORT IN SCHOOLS



Grant's office is to be found within the walls of Redruth School. So is the best indoor cricket facility west of Taunton. So are the records which chart the rise of Ryan Driver, a role model to complement the Nissan model. An infrastructure may be essential for tapping into potential cricket talent but, to have produced a player of a standard that others can aspire to is no less important. "We have other promising young lads and, when they see someone have success, he becomes a role model," Les Driver, Redruth School's deputy head, said. He also happens to be Ryan's father. Driver Jr is the England Schools' Cricket Association cricketer of the year for 1997, an award collected in earlier years by Derek Pringle, Neil Foster, Hugh Morris, Mark Ramprakash, Nick Knight and John Crawley. Driver's style with the bat has been recognised by Worcestershire, who have signed him on a one-year contract. Driver, 18, and in his second term studying sport in the community at Durham University, aims to break into the

reputation against the better bowlers. "Among Driver's successes last year was his 100 not out in 124 balls against Ireland Schools. He scored 257 runs at an average of 51.00 against Ireland, Scotland and Zimbabwe Schools. One catch was described by Hugh Cherry, the England Schools under-19 team manager, as the best he had seen. "Over the six or seven years I have seen him play, I have only seen him drop one," Bolland said. Driver, however, confesses to "two or three a season." Driver's interest in cricket began while watching his father captain Truro. Or, rather, turning his back on dad to "play around" in the nets. Such was the demand for his services by 1997, that he was up at 4am one morning to fly from a two-day Minor Counties match in Bristol to an England Schools fixture against Scotland Schools in Edinburgh. Driver acknowledges that the school's cricket centre for excellence has played in his progress. Upgraded from a sports hall four years ago, now there is a good playing surface, lighting, video equipment and viewing balcony. "It is used non-stop," Shears said. It is a multisports facility in school hours but, otherwise, cricket is the main activity. Shears hopes that a residential block for cricket courses will follow soon. Shears, formerly a club cricketer, invited Cornwall to have its development officer based at the school. "He mixes with our children, finds time to work with some of them, and is seen around the school," the head teacher said. Grant's enthusiasm rubs off. "Unlike the silver lettering on his car,"

ICE HOCKEY: REFEREE KEEPS A TIGHT REIN ON BASINGSTOKE'S MEETING WITH BRACKNELL

Tenacious Cardiff will not relax their hold on title

By NORMAN DE MESQUITA

CARDIFF Devils continue to make it clear that they will not relinquish their Superleague title without a fight and gained their fifth successive win on Saturday - a 6-1 away success over the woeful Newcastle Cobras. The writing was soon on the wall for Newcastle when Steve Moria scored after only 53 seconds and Frank Evans made it 2-0 for Cardiff before the end of the first period. Newcastle's only goal came midway through the second

period, when they were already three behind, and the Devils went on to complete a comfortable win, despite the continued absence of the injured Ken Hodge, who has missed six league and cup games. The Basingstoke rink was full on Saturday for the Bison's final home game against their neighbours, the Bracknell Bees, but the capacity crowd did not see the usual full-blooded encounter because the players were inhibited by an over-fussy referee, who gave 11 penalties in the first period,

with their feelings. Thankfully, the referee allowed them to play in the final period, which was by far the most entertaining. Greg Gatto was the individual star, scoring three Basingstoke goals in their 6-3 success. In the only other fixture on Saturday, Ayr Scottish Eagles beat Nottingham Panthers 2-0 to strengthen their position at the top of the Express Cup table. Colum Cavilla made 23 saves for his first shut-out of the season.

LEGAL & PUBLIC NOTICES

Advertisement for SHEEHAN on BRIDGE. Includes text: "By ROBERT SHEEHAN, BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT. My correspondent Harold Schogger asks me if East-West should have bid Seven Hearts on the deal below. He was East, playing in an OKBRIDGE session on the Internet." Includes a bridge deal and analysis.

Advertisement for KEENE on CHESS. Includes text: "By RAYMOND KEENE, CHESS CORRESPONDENT. Sicilian Defence. Grandmaster John Nunn, once renowned as one of Great Britain's most fearsome attacking players, had an uncharacteristically poor result at Hastings, winning just one game. That game, though, given today, shows an interesting method of facing the Dragon variation of the Sicilian Defence." Includes a chess diagram.

Advertisement for Times Book. Includes text: "The Times Winning Moves 2 contains 240 chess puzzles from international grandmaster Raymond Keene's daily column in The Times, and is available now from bookshops or from B.T. Barnford Ltd (tel: 01376 321276 at £6.99 plus postage and packing)."

Advertisement for WORD-WATCHING. Includes text: "By Philip Howard. ASSIMILADO. a. A Spanish simile. b. The land round Granada. c. A Portuguese African. BURL. a. Country and western singer. b. An idiom. c. A knot. GALABIYA. a. A caracle on the Ebro. b. A forgotten language. c. A smock." Includes a word puzzle grid.

Advertisement for WINNING MOVE. Includes text: "By Raymond Keene. White to play. This position is from the game Kiseleva - Churidse, Niksic 1997. White has a dangerous passed pawn on e7 but if 1. Qxd2 Nxd2 e7 then 2... Kf7 keeps everything under control for Black. How can White improve on this line?" Includes a chess diagram.

Advertisement for RESULTS AND TABLE, page 39. Includes text: "Results and table, page 39".

Advertisement for DRIVER, schoolboy cricketer of the year. Includes photo of Ryan Driver and text: "Driver, schoolboy cricketer of the year, has ambitions to match his high promise".

Large advertisement for Oliver's Army. Includes text: "Hungering for more of Oliver's Army".

THE TIMES MONDAY JANUARY 19 1998

Elegantly negotiating a slippery business

Never let it be said that those involved with the European ice skating championships had not used their imagination.

on to the ice only after particularly good performances. Now they throw all sorts of things at absolutely everybody...

competitor not to let the occasion (or indeed all that slippery ice) get to her. "At last we've got something to shout about," Chris Howarth shouted on Eurosport...



MATTHEW BOND TV ACTION REPLAY

clad Rene Lohse, she whooshed onto the ice wearing a black, see-through, baby-doll nightie.

It takes a lot to silence the enjoyably relaxed but well informed Eurosport commentary team of Howarth and Nicky Slater...

Slater has proved a good signing for Eurosport, willing to use his expert knowledge when he needs to but not afraid to say what most of us are thinking when the occasion merits it.

Slater has proved a good signing for Eurosport, willing to use his expert knowledge when he needs to but not afraid to say what most of us are thinking when the occasion merits it.

continue to drive him to slightly pompous distraction. "I don't think that does ice-dancing any good at all," he complained after the judges left Gryshuk and Platov in second place...

Leicester City and Liverpool serve up novel twist to football's familiar plot at Filbert Street

Hungering for more of Oliver's thin army

What no one ever tells you about the Filbert Street stadium is that it's in a neighbourhood of South Leicester inhabited by other streets named after the almond, the brazil and the walnut.

LYNNE TRUSS



The mascot of Leicester City has been the fox for about 80 years, so I suppose it's a bit late to suggest the change. But what a shame to ignore the nutty connotations so plentifully on offer.

table, Steve McManaman top of the attacking midfield players, Jamie Redknapp top in midfield and so on. I had never seen Michael ("19 last month") Owen before...



Liverpool's highly-rated forwards, Fowler, left, Owen and McManaman, were starved of success by formidable opponents. Photographs: Marc Aspland

half-mast to think "Mm, a packet of crisps would go down well." "Given this rather subjective set of expectations, Leicester came out of the match on Saturday as the more rewarding side.

Liverpool looked lightweight, literally, and I spent most of my time worrying how gossamer-thin and young they all were — as if they might blow away in a gust of wind.

hopeless, buzzy manner of a grating tackle. When Walsh tackled Owen, on the other hand, the result was a small pile of red and white fabric on the far touchline.

January 31, but self-amusement is for life. Both teams possessed energy and dash — but it just seemed to me that the superior skill of Liverpool was cancelled out by the superior doggedness of Leicester.

He looked thin and forlorn, and I can't blame him. His one sprint towards goal in the 63rd minute was cleverly thwarted — Walsh and Elliott knocked him down when they had the chance — and on 78 minutes he was replaced by Patrick Berger.

SPORTS LETTERS

New structure for season

From Mr Angus Mackay Sir, With reference to your alarming article about English clubs pulling out of the Heineken Cup (January 9), Northern Hemisphere rugby union will never catch up with its southern counterparts until the structure of the season and the financial management are sorted out.

be required. Other items to be considered are: 1. Clubs in the European Cup should be financially rewarded according to how far they progress...

Natural justice of unwritten scrummage laws

From Mr Denys Vaughan Sir, Simon Barnes is right about the de facto laws of rugby, especially in the scrum. The game is indeed played by consent; sometimes the referee and laws interfere with natural justice and the serious purpose of winning.

only be able to ask the question if it has reasonable grounds for belief that the batsman is out, then this will not only discourage appeals but also appeals which may have some merit but which the fielding side do not make on fear of penalty.

Likely lads

From Mr Nicholas Skues Sir, More than forty years ago at the Folkestone Easter hockey festival, Frank Reynolds, the then England centre half, who was renowned for his organically-grown moustache and sleek hairstyle, led his team on to the field.

Increasing squash

From Mr Charles Freeland Sir, On January 7 you published an article on squash headed "Britons fall short of Egyptian standard". Anyone who reads it, and indeed anyone who has been reading The Times for the past few years, would believe that the recent British performances in

This week in THE TIMES. Tomorrow Will Southampton prove a happy hunting ground at last for Alex Ferguson... Wednesday Julian Muscat watches Tim Henman and Greg Rusedski serve notice of their Australian Open tennis intentions in Melbourne... Thursday Will Lee Westwood emerge to challenge Colin Montgomerie as Europe's leading golfer this year?... Saturday Football Saturday: the FA Cup fourth round tie-by-tie, Oliver Holt, Frank Leboeuf and Danny Baker

RACING: PROPOSED RULE CHANGE WOULD REQUIRE JOCKEYS TO RIDE OUT HORSES TO LINE

Handicappers see margin for error

By CHRIS MCGRATH

THE spectacle of a horse coasting to success — its rider frequently taking long, gloating looks over his shoulder, sometimes even between his legs — could soon be a thing of the past. A change in Jockey Club rules is being sought by official handicappers so that horses have to be ridden out to the line.

As conscientious practitioners of an inexact science, their principal objective is to ensure that the relative merits of horses are not disguised. An amendment to the rules, however, would also address two controversies in the world of betting: the misjudgments, expensive if infrequent, of jockeys easing up so extravagantly that they are caught close home and the possible influence of spread betting on some races.

RICHARD EVANS

Nap: DOUBLE OSCAR (2.30 Southwell)
Next best: Pickens (3.30 Southwell)

Malcolm Wallace, the Jockey Club's director of regulation, yesterday commented that Nigel Gray, the senior handicapper, is canvassing the opinions of colleagues. Modifications are about to be announced to other aspects of Rule 51, affecting "non-triers", but there has been no



The grey Jeffell storms past Celibate to capture the Victor Chandler Handicap Chase at Ascot on Saturday.

refinement yet of the principle that riders should simply do their utmost to obtain "the best possible placing". Wallace said: "I don't know if, for example, a horse jumps the final obstacle in sixth place, and the jockey looks over his shoulder and sees that the likely seventh has shot his bolt, it should be made necessary for him to ride out to the line. But the handicappers are providing the stimulus in dressing whether the present

wording should be changed, and we will give serious consideration to whatever they come up with." He added that "secretaries would be discussing the options tomorrow."

As for spread betting, Wallace — though still conferring with bookmakers — is satisfied that it does not represent a threat to the integrity of racing. One of the most popular types of bet concerns the

aggregate winning margins at a race meeting. Since the spread is always changing, it is possible — by wagering before and after a race — effectively to bet on a specific winning margin. You can "buy" the winning distance, if believing that it will be greater than the bookmaker has allowed; or you can "sell", if you think it likely to be less. You win or lose in proportion to how accurate your guess proves to be.

Trainers and owners are alleged to have instructed the jockeys of short-priced favourites to win, just narrowly as possible. With this inside knowledge, they can "sell" to lucrative effect. Without it, however, betting on distances is patently the most frivolous of enterprises — and one that should not be dignified as a consideration in the rules of racing. There are many legitimate factors that determine a rider

whether or not to ease his mount on the run-in, including its relative exhaustion, sloth or mental tenderness. These will render changing the rules a complicated business.

If the jockey has more sinister motivations, the spread betting firms seem happy enough to lose out to insiders. They win enough from less well-informed punters to make betting on dis-

JUMP LEADERS

TRAINERS		
Jockey	Win %	Loss %
M. O'Connell	33.2	66.8
J. S. Moore	24.5	75.5

JOCKEYS		
W. J. F. Mott	24.4	75.6
J. S. Moore	24.5	75.5
M. O'Connell	33.2	66.8

tances worthwhile. Should the rules suddenly require horses to be ridden out, hands and heels, those punters — at the moment condemned to suffer at the whim of jockeys — may feel temporarily soothed.

But trainers would have genuine cause for gratitude if a change to the rules were to prevent blunders such as that of Norman Williamson at Leicester in November. He was caught in the last yards of a novice chase on Herbert Lodge, the odds-on favourite, having looked over the wrong shoulder.

Vet's certificates to be verified after Warwick episode

By CHRIS MCGRATH

TO LOSE one runner may be considered unfortunate, but to lose eight is frankly incredible. The stewards at Warwick on Saturday have duly referred the matter of eight non-runners from a field of 26 declared for a qualifier for the Gold Card Hurdle at the Cheltenham Festival to the Jockey Club — where the episode has heightened existing concerns about the issue of vet's certificates.

To be eligible for the final, horses are not actually required to contest a qualifier, once declared. By bizarre coincidence, seven of the non-runners were furnished with certificates, defying various eleven-hour impediments. Each is now being verified by the Jockey Club's security department and disciplinary action will follow should any deceit be exposed.

Dr Peter Webbon, the Jockey Club's chief veterinary adviser, has for several months already been engaged in a review of the integrity of vet's certificates. Having even found instances where they have not been issued by a vet at all, his findings seem certain to result in stricter regulation. There is no doubting the robust health of Jeffell, in common with many of Ar-

thur Moore's horses. The Irish trainer, having won the Ladbrokes Hurdle seven days earlier with Graphic Equiliser, again took the weekend's big race when Jeffell won the Victor Chandler Chase at Ascot.

Yet another grey — consolidating one of the season's defining motifs — in an ANC Express won the Totex Warwick National. The Totex certainly appreciates the interest generated by such races, having laid an unraced horse to lose £1 million by winning the Grand National in any year from 2000 onwards.

The creature burdened with these expectations, named Maidstone Moor, arch, makes his debut at Pontwell today. His owner, Pergus Wilson, has struck out of £4,000 at 250-1 on the basis that he can live up to the billing of the "Weatherby Stars of Tomorrow" bumper. Even if Aintree standards, that would be some feat.

Celebric, the winner of the Gold Cup at Royal Ascot, to join John Dunlop after the recent death of David Morley. Christopher Spence, his part-owner, said: "I think John is the best horse we have wanted to train. Celebric as they were great friends."

SOUTHWELL

- 12.30 Genuine John 2.30 Southwell
- 1.00 Mazzambique 3.00 Vrennan
- 1.30 Zaito 3.30 Florida
- 2.00 Zaito 4.00 Prince De Berry

GUIDE TO OUR RACECARD

Recent runner down in handicap. Six-figure form. P — pulled up. S — stepped up. B — backed. D — disappointing. H — horse. S — sex. G — good. B — bad. C — course. W — win. L — loss. P — place. G — good. B — bad. C — course. W — win. L — loss. P — place. G — good. B — bad. C — course. W — win. L — loss. P — place.

2.00 FAIR ISLE HANDICAP

- 12.30 Genuine John 2.30 Southwell
- 1.00 Mazzambique 3.00 Vrennan
- 1.30 Zaito 3.30 Florida
- 2.00 Zaito 4.00 Prince De Berry

2.00 ISLE OF SKYE CLAIMING LIMITED STAKES

- 2.00 Isle of Skye Claiming Limited Stakes

1.30 BARNA APPRENTICES MAIDEN HANDICAP

- 1.30 Barna Apprentices Maiden Handicap

2.30 LUMBY HANDICAP

- 2.30 Lummy Handicap

3.15 SOUTHWELL MAIDEN HANDICAP

- 3.15 Southwell Maiden Handicap

3.00 WALL HANDICAP

- 3.00 Wall Handicap

3.30 SHELLMERE BELTING STAKES

- 3.30 Shellmere Belting Stakes

FORM FOCUS

Desai Dan 101 lost at 11 in Square Mile Miss in handicap at Lingfield (7), (R). ...

2.45 FOOTBALL HANDICAP CHASE

- 2.45 Football Handicap Chase

3.15 SOUTHWELL MAIDEN HANDICAP

- 3.15 Southwell Maiden Handicap

4.00 BARRON MAIDEN HANDICAP

- 4.00 Barron Maiden Handicap

RACELINE

0930 1684

SOUTHWELL 101 201


SOUTHWELL 102 202

1.15 Gennip, 1.45 Pear Too Touchy, 2.15 Paddy's Storm, 2.45 Broogan Lady, 3.15 NONE STIRRED (nap), 3.45 Calling Wild, 4.15 Young General.

3.15 SOUTHWELL MAIDEN HANDICAP

Proud Sun rises to occasion

Male Urinary Discomfort?



Sabalín is a traditional herbal remedy for the symptomatic relief of short-term male urinary discomfort. Strong and safe, it contains a highly potent extract of the Saw Palmetto fruit to provide gentle, yet effective relief for this inconvenient male problem.

Sabalín

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1.45 BOURTON NOVICES CHASE

3.45 PETER BURGHES MEMORIAL MAIDEN CHASE

RESULTS FROM SATURDAY'S FOUR MEETINGS

2.15 DOCKER HUGHES MEMORIAL CHALLENGE

4.15 WEATHERS STARS OF TOMORROW

COURSE SPECIALISTS

Ascot

Lingfield Park

Newcastle

Warwick

FOR THE RECORD

ATHLETICS

SEVILLE IAAF world cross challenge: Fourth round... (1) P. Tegel (GER) 22:59.57, (2) K. S. Jones (GB) 23:30.00...

BADMINTON

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS: Ballymore: England's S. Girdle... (1) S. Girdle (ENG) 21-19, 15-12...

BOXING

WITCHELDER LEAGUE CENTRE: G. Kelly (Ire) vs M. Brown (Ire)... G. Kelly (Ire) won by points...

ICE HOCKEY

ICE HOCKEY: Newcastle Eagles 1, Cardiff Devils 0... Newcastle Eagles won...

NETBALL

NETBALL: Newcastle Eagles 1, Cardiff Devils 0... Newcastle Eagles won...

ICE SKATING

ICE SKATING: European Figure Skating Championships... (1) A. Schwab (GER)...

MANCHESTER

MANCHESTER: National under-25 championships... (1) P. Sheen (GB)...

LACROSSE

LACROSSE: Premier Division... (1) B. Wright (GB)...

MOTOR RALLYING

MOTOR RALLYING: Paris-Dakar Rally... (1) S. Lindberg (SWE)...

RUGBY LEAGUE

RUGBY LEAGUE: Silk Out Challenge Cup... (1) C. D. Hogg (WAL)...

SKIING

SKIING: Wengen, Switzerland World Cup event... (1) M. Maurer (AUT)...

SWIMMING

SWIMMING: Perth, Australia World championships... (1) D. Rind (AUS)...

TENNIS

TENNIS: Sydney International... (1) J. Hoggard (GB)...

BASKETBALL

NETS CLASSIC COLA NATIONAL CUP: Perth Wildcats 89, Adelaide 76... Perth Wildcats won...

BOWLS

LIBERTY TROPHY: Cornwell 113, Durham 128... Cornwell won...

GOLF

TORBAY: Golfers International... (1) S. D. Gray (GB)...

CRESTA RUN

CRESTA RUN: Moritz, Cuzco Cup... (1) G. Moritz (GB)...

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World Series Cup: Australia vs South Africa... Perth Australia won South Africa 48-9...

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CRICKET

World Series Cup: Australia vs South Africa... Perth Australia won South Africa 48-9...



Ivan Moro, of Spain, rises above the mēlee to find a way through the Hungarian defence in the final of the water polo championships in Perth, Australia yesterday. Spain won 6-4. Report, page 34

CRICKET

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John Goodbody reveals who will run for *The Times* in the London Marathon to raise money for the Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund

Going the extra miles



Running a marathon can be an emotional experience. But few competitors in the event's history will have been so driven by their memories as those runners raising money for the Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund in the 1998 Flora London Marathon.

Included in the Team Flora, which now numbers more than 600, all of whom will be "Running for Diana", is a group of 20 readers of *The Times*. They were selected last week to take part in the event by a panel, which included Chris Moon, the captain of Team Flora.

The *Times* 20 includes Daniel Galvin, at whose hairdressing salon the Princess used to be a client. Mr Galvin, World Hair Colourist of the Year, has run the last two London Marathons. "April 26 will be a very emotional day. I will think about her all through the race," he says. "Last year, when I was raising money for the NSPCC and the going got tough, I thought about the little kids. I am sure our runners will be thinking of Diana and the good causes to which she gave her name."

The distress caused by the death of the Princess and the desire of many Britons to do something in her name has led to unprecedented interest in the event this year. A record 100,000 people applied to enter, including 20,000 who specifically responded to an invitation to run for the Memorial Fund. A total of 41,500 have been accepted to take part in the 1998 race.

They will be participating in an event which is still growing in popularity. Last year it was televised in more than 100 countries, with the viewing figures in Britain peaking at 5.3 million. On the streets, there were an estimated 600,000 cheering on the 29,135 competitors who ran from Greenwich to the Mall.

The *Times* 20, and five reserves, includes people from every nation in the British Isles and a runner from Singapore. They range from people

who have never completed a marathon to experienced athletes such as Frank Murphy, who won a 1,500 metres silver medal in the 1969 European championships, and John McDonald, who has completed more than 120 marathons, including four in eight days. They also hold a variety of jobs — national tennis coach, primary school teacher, trainee accountant, banker, and professor in management.

Some had met the Princess, others had not, but they were so moved by her death that they decided to run in her memory. They will do this on Sunday, April 26, through some of the streets where the



coffin of the Princess was carried on September 6.

Many will be inspired by Chris Moon, the leader of Team Flora, who lost his lower right arm and leg when a landmine blew up in Mozambique and who later worked with the Princess in her campaign against landmines.

He believes that completing the distance of 26 miles, 385 yards is "something that any reasonably healthy person can do if they have the determination or the will".

He is an example to us all. Not only has he run the London Marathon but, last April, he became the first leg amputee to finish the 140-mile Great Sahara Run, described as the toughest in the world.

Mr Moon has been an inspiration to so many people across the world that he has been invited to carry the torch at the opening ceremony of the

Winter Olympic Games in Nagano, Japan, next month.

He met the Princess several times. Alison Bartlett, another member of the *Times* 20, met her only once but their lives intertwined. They went to the same school, West Heath in Kent, which closed on August 31 last year, the day the Princess died. Ms Bartlett then attended Oxford Brookes University, where she studied catering management and publishing, and where she showed her physical ability when she finished second out of 200 girls in a fitness test assessed with the Oxford University Training Corps. She joined Harrods in 1994, working in the management offices for 2½ years, and in September was asked to help co-ordinate the vast volume of letters that the store received after the deaths of the Princess and Dodi Fayed.

"I shall never forget how much she meant to people," she says. "Nor will I forget people's grief in that week." Having completed a three-month course at the Inghelbald School of Design, she is now looking for a job. She is also preparing for the marathon.



Daniel Galvin: "Diana was a genuine ray of sunshine"

"It was a miracle how she got so many countries behind her in the landmine campaign. People did not realise what an incredible ambassador Diana was. She was a ray of sunshine to us all."

- THE TIMES 20**
- 1 Mr John Wright, London
 - 2 Prof Ian Hall, London
 - 3 Mr Frank Murphy, Dublin
 - 4 Mr P. Burrell, London
 - 5 Miss Alison Bartlett, London
 - 6 Mrs A. Stewart, Scotland
 - 7 Mrs Helen Novling, Guildford
 - 8 Miss Annaliese Reekie, London
 - 9 Mrs Donna Harridge, Rugby
 - 10 Mrs Pam Hastie, Banbury
 - 11 Prof Wendy Currie, London

- 12 Mrs Frances Doe, Hailsham
- 13 Mrs Gill Day, Birkenhead
- 14 Mrs K. Barker, Singapore
- 15 Mr Vincent Sullivan, Wexford
- 16 Mr Rob Jacques, Welwyn
- 17 Mr Daniel Galvin, London
- 18 Mr Nigel Sears, Lewes
- 19 Mr John Anderson, Cheltenham
- 20 Mr John McDonald, Worsley

- RESERVES**
- 1 Miss Katherine Boreham, Cornwall
 - 2 Dr Marieke Kruidering, London
 - 3 Mr James Johnson, London
 - 4 Mr John McCabe, Guildford
 - 5 Mr Vernon Neve-Dunn, Purley



Alison Bartlett, above: her life intertwined with Diana's. Right, Joyce Chepchumba of Kenya, a 1997 winner



Going with the flow: runners take a water break



An irregular beat: some of London's finest taking part in the 1997 marathon: above, Diana starts off the 1988 event



Off their marks and going: last year's contenders set off on the 26-mile London Marathon

TAKE THE WEEK OFF. YOU'LL NEED ALL YOUR ENERGY FOR SATURDAY.

SPORT
Vision
WEEKEND
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Don't miss the new 100 page glossy magazine this Saturday in THE TIMES

Under the
David Powell
Young talent
shapes up
Bristol fast
Fourth round

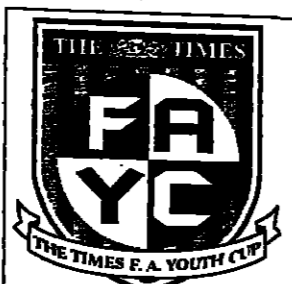
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Appeal
stays libe

Under the skin of sport

David Powell on a football club keen to invest in the stars of tomorrow

Young talent shapes up in Bristol fashion

IF A lesson is to be learnt, it is as well it is learnt young. Bristol City had just beaten Swansea City 2-0 to earn a fourth-round tie with Arsenal in The Times FA Youth Cup...



Fourth round

- Portsmouth v Chelsea
Middlesbrough v Leeds United
Hull City v Ipswich Town
Liverpool v Queens Park Rangers v Blackburn Rovers
Assistant v Bolton City
Southampton v Peterborough United or Wycombe Wanderers
Watford
v Everton or Stoke City
Crewe Alexandra or Manchester City
v Luton Town or Tottenham Hotspur

"Our domination was not as effective as it ought to have been. The win, though, presented the chance to make amends. Now we go to Arsenal and that is a lovely test..."

To understand Burnside's high demands, one has to realise the context. He gave up working for the Football Association to move in with a club. "I was the England youth-team manager for a long time and you do not leave posts like that easily or quickly," he said.

Ten minutes in Burnside's company and you know the kind of man you are dealing with: driven, assertive, progressive. Overwhelming, even, but a man able to convince you of his club's foresight in appointing him to the task of laying foundations for the push towards Premiership football...

Bristol City, though, was just too tempting to resist. They are well-placed in the Nationwide League second division. The important thing is they are thinking Premiership.

John Laycock, the vice-chairman, convinced me that it was right to leave the job I had and face a new challenge," Burnside said. "It is about taking my under-14 team and seeing what we have delivered when they are under-18. How many players have we in the senior squad?"

The importance of a vibrant youth policy is bound to be appreciated at a club where three players fresh from the system are featuring in a successful first team. Tom Doherty, 18, Louis Carey, 20, and Matthew Hewlett, 21, are all performing to a standard demanded by John Ward, the manager.



Leigh Devault, of Swansea City, comes under pressure during their match against Bristol City

ager. "I have got an ego that enjoys putting these kids in," Ward said. "Not an arrogant ego, or a silly one, but I do enjoy giving debuts to young players and, if they come through the ranks, it is even sweeter..."

nurtured, what a rich return that would be on a development programme costing, wages included, £200,000 a year. Against Swansea, Andrew Jordan, a central defender and son of Joe, and Aaron Brown, in midfield, hinted at greatness to come. When Burnside said that "one or two" of his team would probably appear in the first team before the season's end, one imagined that it was them he had in mind.

home," Burnside said. "But, if we see a 13-year-old in, say, Newcastle, whom we think is outstanding, we will offer him not just the technical programme we have here, we will also say there is an education for him at public school."

Galic flair and power warrant Wembley final

BY MICHAEL AYLWIN

LIKE fathers, like sons. Although many of the so-called sons actually play first-class rugby with their figurative fathers, the French students are dominating the inaugural The Times Student European Rugby Championship (SERC) just as their senior counterparts have dominated the Heineken Cup.

The sole French representatives in the competition, the University of Paul Sabatier, Toulouse, have to date swept all before them. Having started in the pool stages with a 70-point thrashing of Northumbria, they went on to top their group ahead of Loughborough. Last Wednesday night, in front of a crowd of more than 3,000, they then stormed into the final with a 48-29 home victory over University College, Cork, who had themselves beaten Oxford earlier in the tournament.

Twelve tries were scored in this all-singing, all-dancing trailer for university rugby, with the Irish claiming five of them. Toulouse were bigger, older and wiser than UCC, and never looked in danger of losing the tie, but the Irish possessed boundless reserves of energy and spirit, still running at Toulouse come the end with as much verve as they did at the beginning.

Garbojosa, their enormously talented right wing. Garbojosa has an outside chance of playing for France in the five nations' championship this year, and is in the preliminary squad. But he is certainly considered a reasonable bet to be in the team this time next year.

Toulouse now progress to the final, where they will meet the winners of the postponed semi-final between Cardiff Institute and Swansea, due to be played on February 4.

There is some debate, however, surrounding the date and venue of the final. The favoured plan is for the game to be played at Wembley as a curtain-raiser to the international between Wales and France on Sunday, April 5. But Michel Bonfils, the French representative on the SERC committee, favours a midweek date in Wales.

Court of Appeal

Defendant entitled to stay

Halki Shipping Corporation v Sopex Oils Ltd
Before Lord Justice Hirst, Lord Justice Henry and Lord Justice Swinton Thomas
Judgment December 19]
A defendant who was a party to an arbitration agreement was entitled to a stay of court proceedings unless the court was satisfied that the action was not brought in respect of the matter referred to arbitration or was brought in an agreement which was null and void, inoperative or incapable of being performed.

section the court shall grant a stay unless satisfied that the arbitration agreement is null and void, inoperative, or incapable of being performed... The court had to consider whether there was a dispute within the meaning of the arbitration clause when the defendants refused to admit and pay the amount claimed.

His Lordship said the appeal turned on the significance of the repeal by the Arbitration Act 1996 of one of the grounds for refusing a stay of legal proceedings where there was an arbitration agreement... The exclusion of the 1930 amendment showed that Parliament did not consider the arbitration clause to be an essential part of the contract.

Law Report January 19 1998

Criminal appeal scope restricted

Regina v Chalkley
Regina v Jeffries
Before Lord Justice Auld, Mr Justice Ian Kennedy and Mr Justice Bodey
Judgment December 18]
The Court of Appeal had no power under section 2(1) of the Criminal Appeal Act 1968, as substituted by section 2(1) of the Criminal Appeal Act 1995, to allow an appeal if it did not think the conviction unsafe but was dissatisfied in some way with what had happened at the trial.

mechanical test of whether a change of plea to guilty was "founded upon" a particular feature of the trial, namely a wrong direction of law or material irregularity, gave way to the broader question of whether the circumstances prompting the change of plea to guilty, the conviction was unsafe.

Under the substituted section 2(1), the court had no power to allow an appeal, where it did not think the conviction unsafe, if it was dissatisfied in some way with what went on at the trial.

Power to stay libel action

Berezovsky and Another v Forbes Inc and Another
Before Mr Justice Poplewell
Judgment October 22]
The High Court had jurisdiction to hear a defendant's application to stay libel proceedings on the ground that England was not the appropriate forum. On the facts, England was not the appropriate forum for an action brought by two Russian nationals against a magazine published in the United States of America...

and Mr Stephen Szule for the plaintiffs. MR JUSTICE POPPLEWELL said Mr Price had relied on Shevill v Press Alliance [1992] 2 WLR 1 and Schapira v Ahronson [unreported, March 21, 1997] for the proposition that to bring an action for damages against a publisher before the courts of any state where the publication was distributed.

1982, applied. Dicta of Lord Justice Peter Gibson in Schapira v Ahronson to the effect that an English resident was entitled to bring proceedings in England against a foreign publisher whose publication enjoyed only a limited English circulation were too widely drawn.

Witness can be shielded from public at inquest

Regina v Newcastle upon Tyne Coroner, Ex parte A
Before Mr Justice Tucker
Judgment December 19]
An inquest remained public where a witness gave evidence from behind a screen and rule 17 of the Coroners' Rules (SI 1984 No 552) did not preclude such an arrangement.

that the application was made by a member of the Northumbria Police armed response team, A. and directed that his identity be not disclosed. The person whose death was the subject of the coroner's inquest had been shot dead by A during a burglary. No national security issue was raised by the case.

His Lordship saw no reason why the same approach should not be adopted in proceedings in the coroner's court, albeit the coroner exercised his powers pursuant to statute. His Lordship accepted the fundamental principle that where a person was shot dead by a police officer there was a public interest in ensuring that the inquiry into the circumstances of the death was conducted openly and in public view but he did not see how that principle was infringed by allowing a witness to give evidence from behind a screen.

Capitalisation, week's change

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

Company	Price	% Chg	Div Yld	P/E
ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES				
Heinz	17.45	+0.10	4.5	14.0
... (many more rows)				
BANKS				
Barclays	10.50	-0.05	3.8	12.5
... (many more rows)				
BREWERIES, PUBS & REST				
Asahi	10.20	+0.10	4.2	13.5
... (many more rows)				
BUILDING & CONSTRUCT				
Woolston	8.50	+0.10	3.5	11.5
... (many more rows)				
BUILDING MATERIALS				
Woolston	8.50	+0.10	3.5	11.5
... (many more rows)				
CHEMICALS				
ICI	15.20	+0.20	5.5	15.5
... (many more rows)				
DISTRIBUTORS				
Woolston	8.50	+0.10	3.5	11.5
... (many more rows)				

Company	Price	% Chg	Div Yld	P/E
ENGINEERING VEHICLES				
... (many rows)				
FOOD MANUFACTURERS				
... (many rows)				
HOUSEHOLD GOODS				
... (many rows)				
INSURANCE				
... (many rows)				
INVESTMENT TRUSTS				
... (many rows)				

Company	Price	% Chg	Div Yld	P/E
LEISURE & HOTELS				
... (many rows)				
MINING				
... (many rows)				
MEDIA				
... (many rows)				
OTHER FINANCIAL				
... (many rows)				

Company	Price	% Chg	Div Yld	P/E
PHARMACEUTICALS				
... (many rows)				
PRINTING & PAPER				
... (many rows)				
PROPERTY				
... (many rows)				
RETAILERS FOOD				
... (many rows)				
RETAILERS GENERAL				
... (many rows)				

Company	Price	% Chg	Div Yld	P/E
SHORTS (under 5 years)				
... (many rows)				
MEDIUMS (5 to 15 years)				
... (many rows)				
LONGS (over 15 years)				
... (many rows)				
UNRATED				
... (many rows)				
INDEX-LINKED (on projected inflation)				
... (many rows)				

Company	Price	% Chg	Div Yld	P/E
ALTERNATIVE INV MARKET				
... (many rows)				

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Company	Price	% Chg	Div Yld	P/E
PHARMACEUTICALS				
... (many rows)				
PRINTING & PAPER				
... (many rows)				
PROPERTY				
... (many rows)				
RETAILERS FOOD				
... (many rows)				
RETAILERS GENERAL				
... (many rows)				
TRANSPORT				
... (many rows)				
WATER				
... (many rows)				
ALTERNATIVE INV MARKET				
... (many rows)				

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RESULTS AND STATISTICS

TODAY
Interim: Adscane, Ashtead, Mfile.
Final: Cardiff Property, Trading statements: Diageo, Shorhouse, Stylor Holdings.
Economics: UK December credit/debit card spending data; December PSBR; Eddie George, Governor of the Bank of England, to testify to House of Lords Economic Sub-committee.
TOMORROW
Interim: Barbour Index, Bucknell Group, Bancorstein Estates (quarterly).
Final: Ushers of Trowbridge.
Trading statements: Body Shop International, Alders.
Economics: UK December car production; Bank of England to announce details of January 28 gilt auction.
WEDNESDAY
Interim: John David Sport (H1), SFI Group.
Final: Lorien, Ultraframe, Watson & Philp.
Economics: UK December retail sales; December provisional M4 lending; December final M0; BBA end-December bank lending; BSA December building society lending.
THURSDAY
Interim: McKay Securities, John Menzies, William Ransome & Son.
Final: First Leisure Corp, Lonrho.
Economics: UK November new construction orders; British Chambers of Commerce fourth-quarter economic survey.
FRIDAY
Interim: WF Electrical.
Final: none scheduled.
Economics: UK fourth-quarter preliminary GDP.

SUNDAY TIPS

The Mail on Sunday: Buy Parco, Cairn Energy, Monmouth and Dragon Oil, British Telecom, Oilco, British Telecommunications. The Sunday Times: Buy Ruberoid, Rathbone Brothers, Cardiff Property, Siebe. The Sunday Telegraph: Buy Pyffes, SFI Group, Shandwick International. The Express on Sunday: Buy Govett Strategic, EW Fact, Servisair, Rebus, Sell BP, Hold Dixons.

COMPANIES MICHAEL CLARK



Results take back seat as Lonrho investors await news on big issues

LONRHO: Full-year results on Thursday are likely to be overshadowed by the issues facing the group, with investors awaiting news on three fronts. First, there are the talks with JCI, the South African mining group, which may or may not lead to a £450 million bid by Lonrho. Alternatively, Lonrho may opt to buy back the 26 per cent stake held by JCI. Then there is the attempt to sell Princess Hotels, Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal having walked away from a deal. Finally, Lonrho is still working on the demerger of its African trading operations. Meanwhile, falling commodity prices are hitting the South African platinum operations and Ashanti, the Ghanaian gold miner in which Lonrho has a 53 per cent stake. And if this was not enough for Sir John Craven, the chairman, and Nick Marrell, the chief executive, to worry about, Tiny Rowland, the former chief executive, has been stirring the pot and calling for the firing of Terrence Wilkinson, who runs the South African operations. Brokers are looking for pre-tax profits of between £106 million and £120 million - an increase or fall, depending on what you include in the figures from last time.



The effect of falling commodity prices is one of the issues facing Lonrho's Sir John Craven

FIRST LEISURE: Final results on Thursday are expected to be accompanied by a substantial writedown of its bingo division, paving the way for an eventual disposal. Although a deal is unlikely to be announced this week, sources suggest Michael Grade, chairman, is close to accepting a £45 million offer from a management team backed by NatWest Ventures after a bidding battle with rival operator Rank. The business, which currently carries a book value of £53 million, was previously expected to fetch no more than £35 million. The poor performance of bingo will overshadow another reasonable performance from nightclubs, bars and health and fitness, although the illuminations season at Blackpool started badly. Mr Grade is likely to outline an ambitious opening programme. Analysts are forecasting a dip in comparable pre-tax profits from £42.1 million to about £41.5 million, with earnings per share down to 17.5p (18.3p). The dividend will rise to about 8.6p (8.44p).

SOMERFIELD: Last week's flurry of activity carried the shares to a new high and revived talk of a bid from one of the supermarket group's bigger rivals. Some brokers discount the possibility of a bid and say it could be just a re-rating of the shares. No doubt the company will be questioned closely about any speculative buying when it unveils half-year figures tomorrow. These are expected to reveal a flat performance with pre-tax profits of around £56.3 million against £54.6 million last time. Earnings, however, are likely to be almost 15 per cent ahead at 14.9p. Despite the tough environment Somerfield has had some success

in boosting margins and reducing the cost base. The one remaining area of concern will be sales growth, with brokers forecasting a 1 per cent increase to £1.7 billion. Any benefits of store openings and re-fits will be offset by store closures and could, it is feared, result in a drop in like-for-like sales of 6 per cent. The interim payout is expected to rise 10 per cent to 3.67p.

JOHN MENZIES: There will be little to cheer from half-year figures on Thursday, with brokers forecasting little change on the first six months of last year. Nick Bubb at Societe Generale Straus Turnbull, the broker, is looking for pre-tax profits of £2 million against £2.5 million last time. "Christmas has been bad, with poor sales of toys and a disappointing performance at Early Learning," said Mr Bubb. The group has sold two of its biggest stores in Edinburgh and the Metro Centre in Newcastle and now sees itself as a distributor, hence the change in the listing of the shares from retailing to distribution. The bulk of profits continue to come from wholesaling. Mr Bubb added: "The group will have lost on retailing in the first half but usually makes up for it in the second six months, traditionally its strongest period." The payout should be maintained at 4.8p.

JOHN DAVID SPORT: In contrast to last week's upbeat trading statement from rival JJB Sports, the market is looking for a static performance when half-year results are unveiled on Wednesday. Pre-tax profits are expected to come in virtually unchanged at £5 million. Christmas has been bad with like-for-like sales down around 6 per cent, say brokers. Much depends on the performance of new stores and the ability to control margins. The dividend will be pegged at 1.7p.

ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

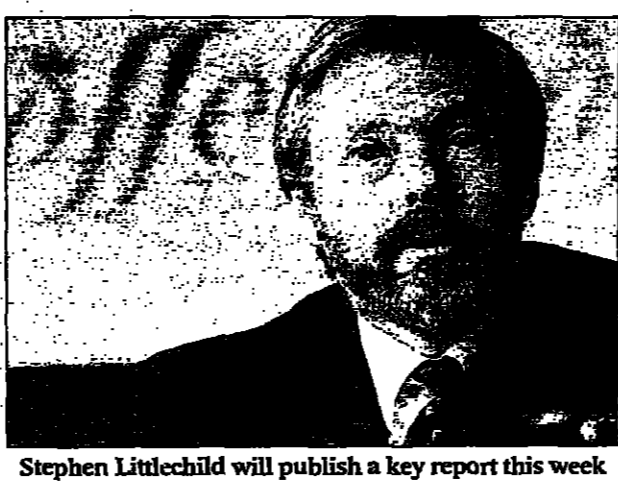
Accounting the cost of Christmas

After weeks in thrall to the Asian confidence crisis, markets may give other economic issues a look-in this week. At home, more signs will show how sharply the UK economy is slowing and if consumer spending is really cooling. Today the Government should report a December public sector borrowing requirement of £300 million, if the median forecasts collected by Standard & Poor's MMS International proves correct. More attention will focus on tomorrow, when retail sales figures for December will shed more light on the yuletide tiff mystery. Some retailers have done well in this peak month; others have reported a poor Christmas. Aside from a backlash from the windfall effect on big ticket items, no clear pattern so far separates these groups. The MMS median forecast is for a 0.5 per cent volume rise on the month, pushing year-on-year sales up 6.1 per cent. MMS itself is slightly more optimistic, but UBS looks for an average 0.3 per cent gain in December for 5.8 per cent year on year. On the same day, M4, the wide measure of money supply, is on average also expected to have grown by 0.5 per cent in December, pushing annual growth up from 10.5 per cent in November to an eyebrow-raising 11.5 per cent for the calendar year. Again, forecasts vary widely, according to readings of what is going on in Britain's shopping centres. On Friday officials take a first stab at calculating growth of the UK economy in the fourth quarter and, therefore, 1997 as a whole. The City's best guess is that gross domestic product gained 0.6 per cent in the autumn quarter, nearly low enough for the authorities' liking. This would shrink 12-month growth from 3.75 per cent in September to 3.25 per cent for calendar 1997. Aboard, the revived issue of whether northern hardliners will allow Italy to join the euro may enliven the foreign exchanges. Today Italy presents its 1998 Budget as EU finance ministers meet in Brussels. Tomorrow Chancellor Kohl meets Italy's Romano Prodi in Rome. Words and gestures will be noted. Aside from further eruptions, the Asian crash will come to the fore in scheduled news briefings by Japan's Finance Minister, starting Wednesday, which may shed light on further policy stimuli. Also on Wednesday, America reports its November trade figures. On the MMS median forecast, the monthly deficit rises from \$9.7 billion (£6.06 billion) to \$10.2 billion. This statistic will be subjected to ever closer monthly scrutiny. GRAHAM SEARJEANT

Power switch unlikely before autumn

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT
THE plan to edable 25 million homes to shop around for electricity will be postponed this week, with the eagerly awaited introduction of competition likely to be delayed until September. A key report giving warning of the electricity industry's lack of readiness to deliver the programme will be published early this week by Stephen Littlechild, the electricity regulator. The report by PA Consulting is expected to say that competition in household electricity should be started in the autumn, five months after the first planned start-up in April. The report will be published before a meeting between industry chiefs and John Battle, the Energy Minister, on Thursday, when Mr Battle is expected to announce the delay in order to avoid technical chaos. The move will be a political embarrassment for Mr Battle, who last year surprised industry wretches by taking personal responsibility for the successful delivery of the 1998 electricity programme. It will also infuriate British Gas,

which has spent millions of pounds on a high-profile advertising campaign to herald its move into selling electricity. It had been hoped that competition in domestic electricity would have been achieved while the UK held the presidency of the European Union, as a signal to other countries amid plans for the liberalisation of the European-wide energy market. That presidency ends in June, but the PA report will give warning of the dangers of setting too optimistic a target and missing the date again.



Stephen Littlechild will publish a key report this week

TUC hopes for membership boost through £1m academy

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT
THE TUC is embarking on a major membership drive with the creation of a trades union school to train recruits and organisers. It has pumped £1 million into the new academy, which will give union members training in campaigning and recruitment. The aim is to boost membership in newer industries, where union membership is weak, in addition to strengthening unions in those work-

places which already have union recognition. The first class at the academy will have 35 trainees sponsored by 16 unions. They will spend a year in the classroom at the TUC's education centre and working at different union offices around the country. The TUC said that the mix of trainees reflects its aim to bring in new blood. It said that most of the trainees were in their twenties, two thirds are women and 8 per cent black. Frances O'Grady, director of the TUC's New Unionism project, which began the academy, said the trainees would "target employees in workplaces which already recognise unions, but where membership is not 100 per cent. And they will also reach out to people working in the newer industries, where unions have yet to get a firm foothold".

Table with columns for 1997/98 High/Low, 1997/98 Mid cap (million), Price, Why +/-, YTD %, P/E, and 1997/98 High/Low, 1997/98 Mid cap (million), Price, Why +/-, YTD %, P/E. Lists various companies like AEA Systems, Adscane, Ashtead, etc.

THE FACTS

Market cap: £8 billion
Pre-tax profit: £335 million
Total gross premiums: £2.25 billion
Shareholders' funds: £4.9 billion
Employees: 42,350

THE BOARD

Richard Harvey, 46, the newly installed chief executive, took over this month from Allan Bridgewater, soon to become chairman of Swiss Re (UK). Mr Bridgewater, 60, cleared Norwich Union to flotation before retiring. He was appointed CBE in the New Year's Honours.

Mr Harvey qualified as an actuary with Phoenix Insurance in 1975, after reading mathematics at Manchester University, and later joined Sun Alliance, running the group's subsidiary in New Zealand. He did the same for Norwich Union, before returning to the UK in 1993. Non-executive chairman is George Paul, 57, who stepped down in September as chairman of Harisons & Crossfield, now reinventing itself as a chemicals group called Elements. Mr Paul this month joined the board of The Fleming Overseas Investment Trust.

Non-executive directors include Dr Elizabeth Vallance, wife of Sir Iain, the BT chairman, and chairman of St George's Healthcare NHS Trust. Recently retired as a director of HMV Group, Dr Vallance is visiting Professor in Politics at the University of London. Andrew Euxton (not his Barclays namesake) is a former director of RTZ, now Rio Tinto, and previously sat on the board of Bakyrchik Gold. Francis Cator, a non-executive director since 1978, was joint vice-chairman of J Henry Schroder Wagg until 1987, and is former deputy chairman of Anglian Water. Bryan Bassett is a director of Royal Ordnance and Fleming Overseas Investment Trust, while David Keys, 63, is a former main board director of Morgan Grenfell. He is chairman of HFC Bank and deputy chairman of Tilbury Douglas. Sir Michael Partridge, 61, is director of the Stationery Office, and chairman of Middlesex University. Jonathan Peel, 59, is chairman of the Broads Authority and deputy chairman of the National Trust Council, and Alan Perelman, 48, is finance director of Whitbread. He is a non-executive director of Britvic Holdings, and sits on the CBI's Economic Affairs Committee.

Norwich Union plc may be only six months old, but the mutual insurer that floated on the stock market in June has 200 years of history to its name. Few in the industry expect it to remain in its present form for another hundred years.

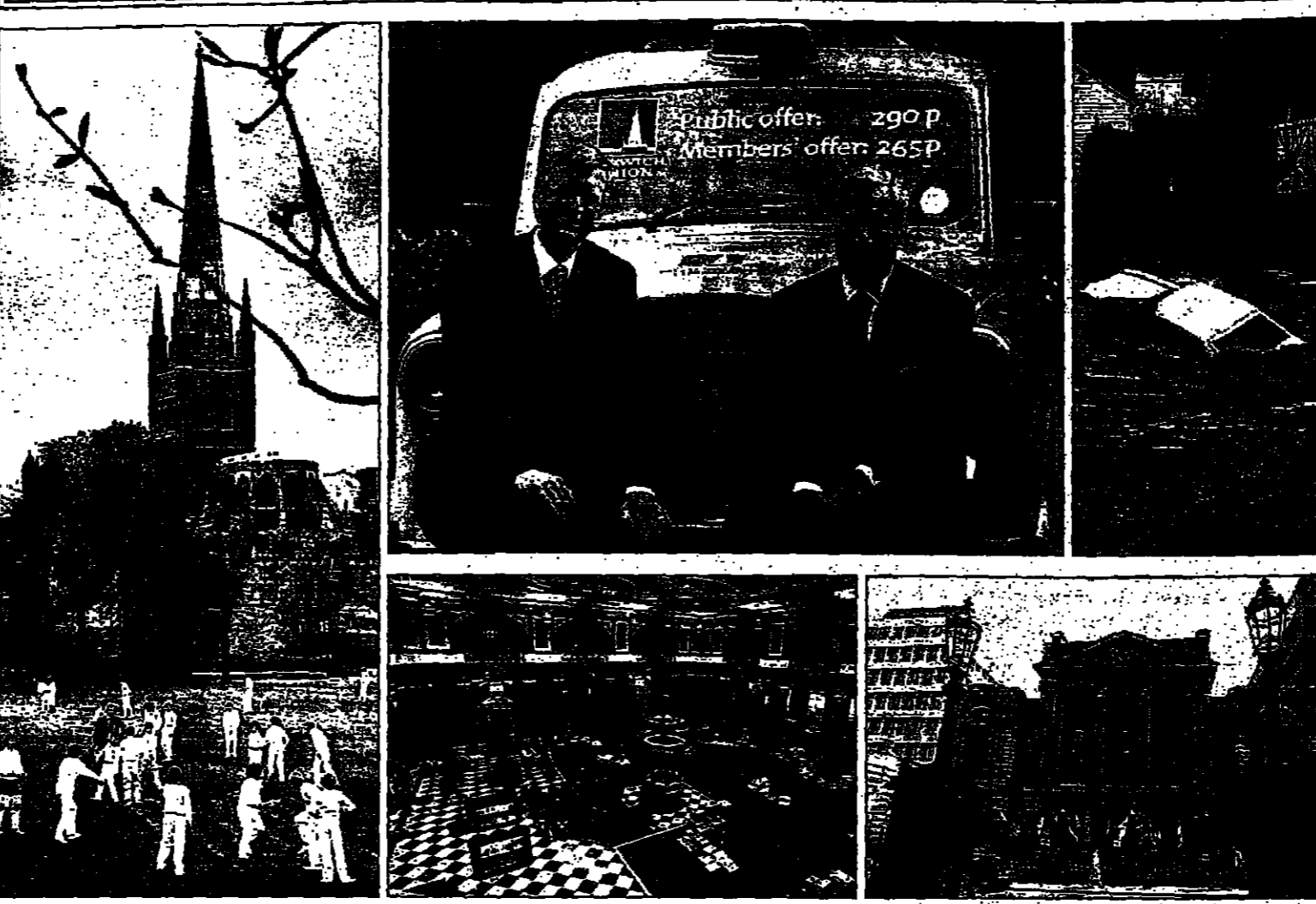
In a market sector that has seen rapid consolidation, and with continued speculation that the bigger banks remain keen to acquire their own insurance company, Norwich Union is seen as an attractive, albeit currently expensive, target. In its favour, it has a strong brand name, but potential buyers may be discouraged by its exposure to competitive overseas markets such as Australia and France.

Half the company's 12,000-strong UK workforce is in Norwich, a thriving market town in 1797 when Thomas Bignold, a 36-year-old businessman, founded The Norwich Union Society for the Insurance of Houses, Stock and Merchandise from Fire.

Norwich was largely built of wood, and the threat to homes and property was tangible. Many of the earliest Norwich Union policyholders were small traders and householders. By 1804 Norwich Union had sums insured in excess of £3 million, and 50 agents across Norfolk, Suffolk and Kent. In 1808 a severe winter brought widespread suffering and loss of life, prompting Mr Bignold to establish a life society. By 1897, the Norwich Union Life Society had become a major international operation.

The possibility of converting from mutual to plc was first mooted in 1970, but decided against. The company continued to grow and by 1986 total worldwide funds exceeded £10 billion for the first time, making Norwich Union probably the largest single investor in property in Britain. The deep recession of the early 1990s drastically reduced investment yields and hit Norwich Union's property portfolio. Restructuring and cost-cutting paved the way for last June's stock market flotation, which saw the members' share offer almost four times oversubscribed. The public share offer was more than ten times subscribed by institutional investors.

CORPORATE PROFILE



Richard Harvey, left, and Allan Bridgewater successfully brought Norwich Union, which is heavily exposed to motor insurance, to market last June. 200 years after it was founded in Norwich. The city's cathedral adorns NU's logo and the headquarters, with its ornate marble hall, is still sited there.

number of continental insurers have been cited as possible buyers. The drawback for potential bidders is the company's combination of life and general insurance business. Before making an approach, a suitor would need to decide which part of the business it wanted to keep, as few companies — perhaps with the exception of Barclays — would want both parts. If the life business was kept and the general insurance business was sold off, how could the brand name be shared between the two? Trying to sell part of the business without the benefit of the brand name would probably lead to a compromise on price.

Norwich Union has a varied business portfolio, unlike pure life companies such as Scottish Amicable, which was bought by Prudential last year. It has life and pensions products, a healthcare division, heavy exposure to the UK motor insurance market, a household

insurance division and some interests overseas. The investment in the Irish Republic has paid off but Australia, Spain and France have proved tougher. Analysts believe that in the next few years it will need to decide whether to pour lots of new money into these territories or sell out. Meanwhile, the motor market in the UK is still highly competitive and although the biggest player, Direct Line, has seen its profits bounce back, its smaller rivals are still attempting to hit critical mass by undercutting prices.

Premium rates have held relatively steady on the home insurance front, since customers tend to shop around less for the best rates — in contrast with motor insurance. On the life side, Norwich Union benefits from a strong brand name, although whether this will survive the transition to plc remains to be seen. Norwich Union favoured conversion since it gave it access to capital, and would allow it to invest in more exciting ways. Six months on, it is too early to say whether that aim is being achieved.

Analysts are impressed with the company's management, in particular Richard Harvey, the new and youthful chief executive. One analyst said: "He has firm control of the company and a good understanding of its finances. We are looking forward to seeing the company improve further under his direction." Mr Harvey, 46, replaced Allan Bridgewater, a colourful and well-known figure both in Norwich and in the world of insurance, who decided to retire once he had helped to steer the mutual

strike price on flotation of 290p. Banks are looking for strongly branded companies whose products are sold through independent financial advisers. Norwich Union, because of its mix of general and life business, is not quite as attractive as companies such as Legal & General, Standard Life, Scottish Widows and Scottish Equitable, Friends Provident or NPL. Long term, Norwich Union will be well-placed to cash in on the new individual savings account, which the Government is proposing to introduce — assuming it clings to its independence. Further opportunities lie in the general increased demand for life and savings products. The industry is set for continued growth, as more people realise that they will not be able to rely on state help in their old age. Norwich Union is only modestly successful in the expression of its ethical principles, according to Integrity Works, our independent consultant. The staff code of business conduct contains a rather predictable list of principles — better conveyed than most, though less comprehensive than the best.

The company published a code of conduct to tie in with its flotation, and monitors it through "normal management reporting" systems. The challenge for financial services companies such as Norwich Union is to ensure these systems are robust enough to keep ethical principles foremost in managers' minds. Absence of data makes it hard to tell what Norwich Union directors are currently paid. Based on past experience, they are likely to be thin cats, according to Crisp Consulting, which found Mr Bridgewater to be about 70 per cent underpaid in 1996, earning £468,000, when he should have been on £1.7 million. Too late now.

MARIANNE CURPHEY

Ethical expression	4/10
Fast-cat quotient	9/10
Financial record	3/10
Share performance	8/10
Attitude to employees	8/10
Strength of brand	10/10
Innovation	5/10
Annual report	5/10
City star rating	6/10
Future prospects	7/10
Total	65/100

Ethical expression is evaluated by Integrity Works. The fastest quotient, in which best boardroom pay multiples scores highest, is provided by Crisp Consulting.

Millennium bug fear for factories

BRITAIN faces the risk of major industrial disasters because companies are failing to realise that the millennium bug threatens plant machinery as well as IT systems. Although many businesses are beginning to tackle the threat in their computer systems, PA Consulting Group says that most businesses are still ignoring the danger posed by the "embedded" devices within industrial plants and other machinery.

The firm's survey of more than 300 UK manufacturing and process companies shows that only a third have set aside a budget to look at the problem. Less than a quarter have undertaken a full audit. One multinational chemicals company responded to the survey by saying: "We would be amazed if there is not a major chemical disaster somewhere caused by year 2000 problems with embedded software."

PA Consulting said: "Senior managers who are not planning seriously and acting now to achieve millennium-readiness for embedded software in their products, processes and infrastructures are failing in their duty to shareholders, customers and employees."

"Time is running out for many companies to take corrective action and their organisations are at risk."

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CHANGE ON WEEK

THE POUND

US dollar 1.6365 (+0.0218)
German mark 2.9905 (+0.0514)
Exchange index 105.1 (+1.5)
Bank of England official close (4pm)

STOCK MARKET

FT 30 share 3327.0 (+5.4)
FTSE 100 5263.1 (+124.8)
New York Dow Jones 7753.55 (+173.13)
Tokyo Nikkei Avge 16046.45 (+1051.35)

FOREIGN RATES

	Bank	Buyer	Bank
Australia \$	2.57	2.59	
Austria Sch	21.96	20.30	
Belgium Fr	64.82	59.86	
Canada \$	2.423	2.281	
Cyprus Cyp	0.919	0.947	
Denmark Kr	11.96	11.07	
Finland Mk	9.58	8.53	
France Fr	10.47	9.69	
Germany Dm	3.15	2.91	
Greece Dr	497	459	
Hong Kong \$	13.48	12.28	
Iceland	131	111	
Ireland Pt	2.24	1.15	
Israel Sh	6.29	5.84	
Italy Lira	2116	2879	
Japan Yen	225.13	207.90	
Korea \$	2.026	1.856	
Netherlands Gld	3.556	3.291	
New Zealand \$	2.50	2.69	
Norway Kr	42.5	11.59	
Portugal Esc	317.53	295.50	
S Africa Rd	8.82	7.96	
Spain Ps	24.29	245.50	
Sweden Kr	13.97	12.21	
Switzerland Fr	2.59	2.21	
Turkey Lira	325.629	300.00	
USA \$	1.741	1.58	

Rates for small denomination bank notes only as supplied by Barclays Bank. Different rates apply to traveller's cheques. Rates as at close of trading on Friday.

THIRTEEN TIMES

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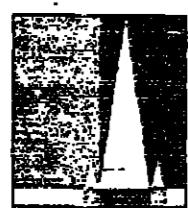
CHANGING TIMES

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PROFILE 44 Changing times for Norwich Union

BUSINESS

COMPANIES

Big issues in limelight at Lonrho



BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

MONDAY JANUARY 19 1998

Broker sounds death knell of the small company effect

THE continuing poor stock market performance of small companies has led analysts at Hoare Govett to administer last rites for the small company effect...

A decade ago, Hoare Govett was the first broking house in the UK to publicise the exceptionally strong record of smaller companies with the creation of a dedicated index. From 1955 to 1989, the Hoare Govett Smaller Companies Index outperformed the FTSE All-share index by 6 per cent a year.

A new analysis by Elroy Dimson and Paul Marsh, professors at the London Business School, finds that this inferior performance is due to the weaker financial results from smaller companies. It is not, as some have claimed, a short-lived and inexplicable stock market anomaly.

year, was more than twice the rate produced by large companies. Since 1989, the positions have reversed and dividend growth from small companies has lagged behind.

The remaining question is why the small company effect stopped working. Mr Morgan and Professor Dimson suggest large British companies have become much more nimble - the main advantage traditionally enjoyed by small companies.

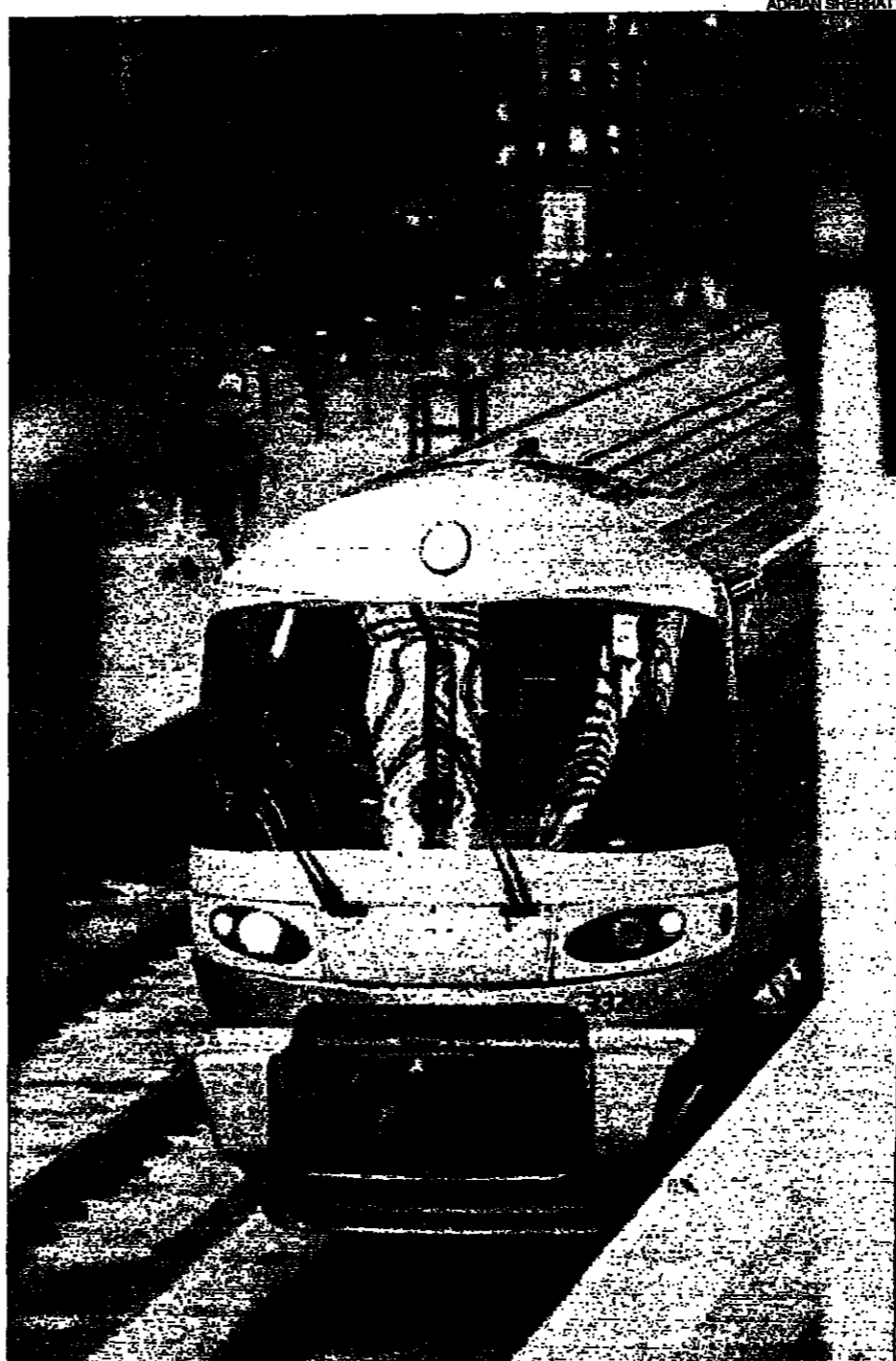
technology industries, they have learned to live with short product life cycles and the need for constant innovation.

Housebuilder profits from public subsidy

WILSON CONNOLLY, the quoted housebuilder, stands to make a £210 million profit on the back of the millions of pounds of government aid that persuaded Hyundai to build its £2 billion microchip plant in Scotland.

Hyundai, one of the chaebol, or conglomerates, that dominate the Korean economy, has now shelved its plans for two factories in Dunfermline because of the economic turmoil afflicting South-East Asia.

owned options over 600 acres of the Dunfermline land through its acquisition of London & Clydeside almost three years ago. It gained £3.6 million from selling 150 acres of this to Scottish Enterprise, which then gave the land to Hyundai and allowed the housebuilder to plan for the 450 acres surrounding the site.



THE Heathrow Express high-speed rail link enters partial service today, and for the first time passengers with valid airline tickets will be able to travel to and from Paddington free of charge.

World leaders warned over threat to free trade

THE World Trade Organisation has called on world leaders to make a united and public stand against the threat of protectionism that has arisen because of the economic crisis in South-East Asia.

WTO officials said Signor Ruggiero was asking governments to let him know by the end of the month whether they were prepared to send heads of state to the May 20 meeting.

Crossword puzzle grid with clues and solutions.

SOLUTION TO NO 1305. ACROSS: 1 Quack 4 Tambour 8 Aquaplane 9 Ebb 10 Huff 11 Kerenski 13 Carnal 14 Flimply 17 Napoleon 19 Onus 22 Eve 23 On the make 24 Elevens 25 Freak

IMF chief tells of frustration over debt-relief stance

MICHEL CAMDESSUS, the managing director of the International Monetary Fund, has written to the finance ministers of major industrialised countries to express his increasing frustration at the refusal of Japan and Germany to agree to more debt relief for the world's poorest countries.

New Look in good shape for flotation

NEW LOOK, the womenswear retailer founded 30 years ago by Tom Singh, is looking increasingly ready for a stock market flotation after reporting a strong rise in sales over the Christmas period.

Advertisement for 'This week in THE TIMES' featuring Adam Jones and Anatole Kalesky.

Large advertisement for 'PAYING TOO MUCH FOR LIFE ASSURANCE?' featuring a table of insurance rates and contact information for Direct Life & Pensions.